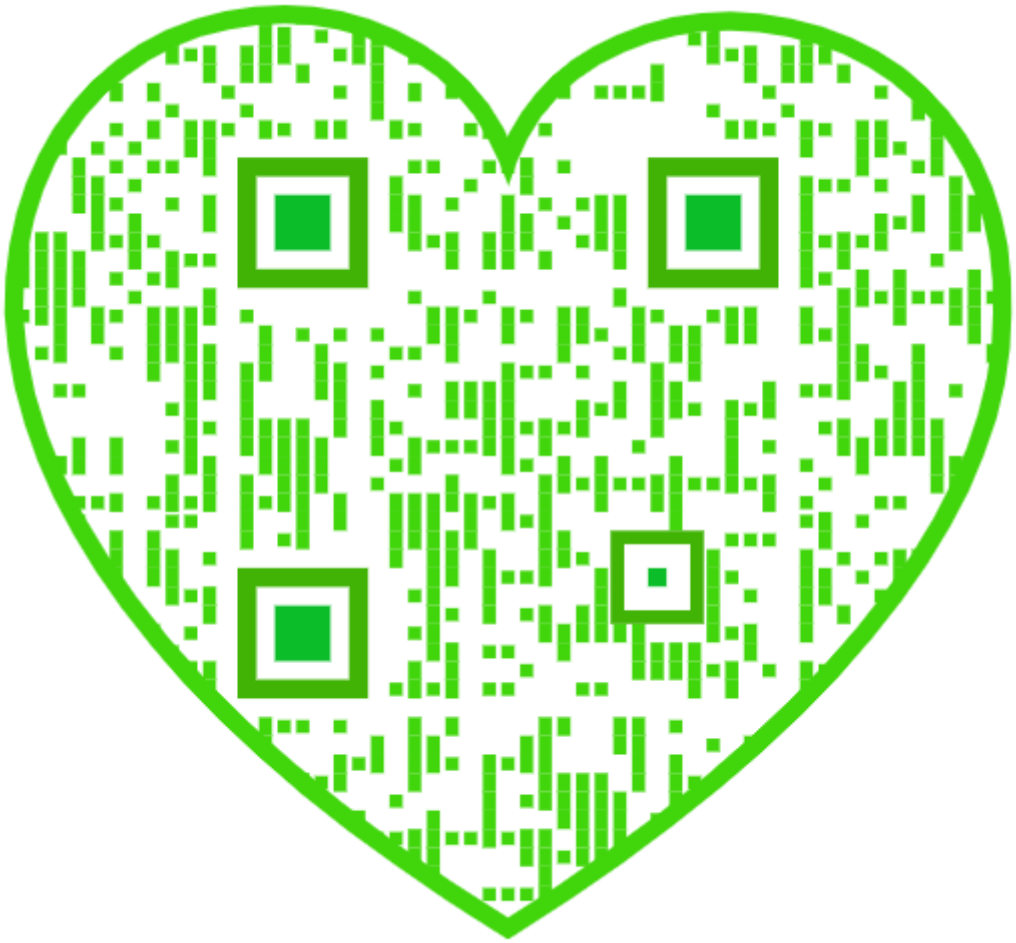

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OF

SPORTS AND PASTIMES

VOL. VII.

THE

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OF

SPORTS AND PASTIMES

EDITED BY

ALFRED E. T. WATSON

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THE

BADMINTON MAGAZINE

July 1898

A SECOND INNINGS

A STORY OF A 'VARSITY MATCH

BY CAPTAIN PHILIP C. W. TREVOR

VIOLET MARSTON had been cradled in cricket.

The number of women who profess a knowledge of or an affection for the game grows yearly greater; though the fact is probably due in some way to the laws of attraction, rather than to any increasing popularity in the game itself.

In proportion as men—at any rate male men—fight more and more shy of dances and 'at homes' of sorts, those who have charge of budding womanhood must seek them in their lair. They are inaccessible to a great extent on the river or in the football field, and the bike is the ogre of chaperons; but the cricket ground still presents possibilities.

Violet Marston, however, went to cricket matches from love rather than design. Cricket, in fact, had been more or less the reason of her existence. Twenty-four years previously 'Brummel' Marston had made history as one of the greatest of 'blues,' but it is an open question whether Violet's mother was not as much attracted by the great cricketer's good looks as by his fame. At any rate, she fell in love with him, to the great advantage of 'Brummel.' Cricket at the University will always do a good deal for a man, especially if he earns the coveted blue. It will command a mastership at a public school, even though the candidate's

Latin be ecclesiastical rather than classic, or his treatment of mathematical questions wildly original; whilst if in addition he takes orders, he increases his chances of preferment. However, it will not always provide him with a wife with seven thousand a year, so that on the whole 'Brummel' had every reason to congratulate himself. Wherefore, having modestly and successfully proposed to the lady, he politely declined the Rugby mastership that had been kept warm for him, though he persevered in his intention of presenting himself for ordination. His after life gave him no cause to repine. Neither prime ministers, lord chancellors, nor patrons of livings, can be accused of neglecting clergymen with seven thousand a year, and at forty-seven 'Brummel' Marston was one of the most popular Deans in England. 'Quite refreshing to have a man appointed who hasn't been a schoolmaster,' said the lady who ruled the Close—herself the wife of an eminent preceptor of youth — 'so original!' And, whether those who dwelt in the Cloister agreed with her or not, experience soon proved that the new Dean was 'just the very man we wanted.' Not a little of the Dean's popularity was due to his wife's singular capacity for not interfering. For some years past her husband had been incumbent of a fashionable London parish, and she was relieved to find that an express train would transplant her from the Deanery to Paddington in fifty-five minutes. Mayfair therefore continued to be her headquarters, and consequently the home-in-chief of her daughter Violet, who was then nineteen years old. Their only son was in his third year at Cambridge, and Captain of the Eleven. Naturally, the Dean took the keenest interest in his boy's performances, and read with quiet satisfaction the paragraphs in the papers which informed a public always eager for gossip that Mr. C. F. Marston, this year's light-blue captain, was the only son of 'Brummel' Marston, who won the 'Varsity match for Cambridge twenty-four years ago. Violet's concern for the Cambridge Eleven was possibly greater still; though it had probably never occurred to her to think that her interest in Jim Ward, the most brilliant batsman who had been up at the 'Varsity for some years, was anything but the appreciation of a great player by one who understood the game. Ward had been in the Eton Eleven with Charlie Marston, and the two had a Jonathan and David association of some years' standing. It would probably be unfair to say that Mrs. Marston had closed her cricket book with her marriage; but when, the previous year, Violet made her bow to Her Majesty, and was really at last 'out,' the girl's taste for cricket by no means

facilitated the mother's plans. 'She doesn't care to go to any place but Lord's,' poor Mrs. Marston complained: 'and when we get back in the evening, she says she is far too tired to dance.'

I fear the Dean was secretly delighted, nor probably was he altogether sincere when he replied: 'Well, my dear, don't try to force her; take her to see cricket as often as ever she likes. She'll soon get tired of it;' and he added, with an air of resignation, 'when you can't go, I'll manage to find time to take her myself.' To do the Dean justice, he managed to find that time pretty frequently, but the pair sometimes got into trouble, for all that. They departed one morning with strict injunctions to be back by four, 'in time to go to the Ashburns,' for young Ashburn stood particularly high in the list of eligibles. It was half-past seven before they arrived, and Violet hadn't even the decency to try to look guilty or repentant. 'He is not out yet, mother,' was all she said as she burst into the room. 'Out—who?' 'Why, the old man, of course!' 'The old man? What old man?' 'Why, mother, how silly you are—W. G. Grace, of course, and he's got 171. Oh, dad! you must take me to see the finish to-morrow morning.' It was quite hopeless; so Violet, who had always been a spoilt child, was allowed to do her season at Lord's, only appearing in Mayfair with her mother when a match was over early on the third day. June set in, and the cricket prophets were busy with the prospects of the 'Varsity match. Public opinion was strongly in favour of Oxford, though it was admitted that Ward was the best bat in either Eleven. Oxford, however, were a very level batting side, and their fast bowler, Wharton, had met with such phenomenal success in the trial fixtures that great things were expected of him in the big match

In spite of the attractive programme which the M.C.C. Committee had arranged for the month, the days seemed to Violet to drag along. Monday, June 28, was the date fixed for the 'Varsity match, and on the Sunday afternoon Charlie Marston arrived in town, bringing Jim Ward with him. The Dean's conduct on this occasion can scarcely be defended. He apparently had induced Mrs. Marston to pay one of her angel visits to the Deanery on the previous day, and, just as Violet and the two blues were sitting down to dinner, he suddenly made his appearance. His explanations were lame and guilty, and he could offer no valid defence to the charge which his daughter brought against him of travelling on Sunday. 'You see, dear, I was afraid that your mother would be bored by all the cricket that would be talked in the next three days, and so, as she had to be a few days at the

Deanery this month, I thought she might as well start yesterday.' Whereupon his daughter merely hugged him and called him a dear old thing. That evening the conversation at dinner, which lasted three hours, was distinctly secular. 'You see, then,' said Charlie, finishing a lengthy harangue, 'that a wet wicket is practically our only chance. They're a finer batting side all through than we are; and Wharton bowls better on a plumb wicket than on a soft one.' Violet, sincerely hoping for a downfall of rain, only said, 'Aren't you rather forgetting Mr. Ward?' 'Ah, yes,' said Charlie, 'that's true. You're our sheet anchor, Jim.' Then, to the Dean, 'The worst of Jim, father, is that he's such a bad starter. I never dare look when he plays the first ball. I always ask some one to tell me when it's over. Ah! Jim, if your first ball's from Wharton, I wish he'd favour you with one of his slows.' Violet and the Dean asked for an explanation. 'Charlie's quite right,' Jim said, humbly; 'I am a most terrible starter, and I've been bowled three times this year first ball. Now, Wharton has a weakness for bowling a very slow ball to a new-comer, and a very bad slow he bowls, too. Charlie thinks if he treated me to one of these, first ball, I might knock it, and then, perhaps, I should be all right.' So the talk went on until the Dean, in his joint capacity of host and trainer, insisted on bed.

Whatever was the nature of Violet's orisons on the previous night, Monday, June 28, broke gloriously fine. She awoke soon after six, and, jumping out of bed, threw up the window. 'No luck,' she murmured; 'they'll play on a plumb wicket!'

Play was advertised for twelve o'clock, but soon after half-past ten the Dean and Violet were on the practice ground at Lord's, watching the rivals batting at the nets. In course of time the bells rang and the crowd took their seats, the men to watch, and the women to wait till the luncheon interval should transform idiotic enthusiasts into decent companionable fellow-creatures again. The Dean entered the members' enclosure, and imparted to Violet a piece of information. 'Charlie's won the toss,' said the girl excitedly to a lady to whom she had been talking when her father came in, 'so Cambridge will have the best of the wicket, anyhow.' The lady addressed evidently thought that it was necessary to make some sort of a reply; and, vaguely imagining that because she had some six or eight yards of dark blue ribbon in her hat she was somehow connected with Oxford, murmured, 'Oh, really, but don't you think that's rather unfair? Perhaps they'll take it turn and turn about.' The Dean's quiet amusement was unnoticeable in the ill-suppressed merriment that

WATCHING THE RIVALS BATTING AT THE NETS

ensued; and Violet whispered to him, petulantly, 'Serves me right for talking cricket to a woman.' Then the Oxford Eleven took the field, and the game began. As soon as the first two batsmen left the Pavilion Charlie joined his father and sister. 'Yes,' he said, in answer to their inquiries, 'the same as usual. Jim's in second wicket, and myself fourth.'

The start was most promising for Cambridge, and it was not until fifty-three runs had been scored that the first wicket fell, whilst twenty-nine more were added before the second was captured. Two wickets for eighty-two was a prosperous state of affairs, and the supporters of Cambridge were jubilant as Ward came out to bat. Charlie fixed his eyes on the ground as Jim took guard. 'Tell me when the first ball's over,' but his sister was too excited to reply. It seemed to Charlie that Wharton was an unconscionable time delivering that first ball to the new batsman. Then the silence of the members' stand was broken by the sound of a girl's voice. 'Charlie, look, quick, he's bowled a slow.' But the Cambridge captain had barely time to glance before a great shout went up from the crowd, and he was but too well aware of its import!

The crowd has two methods of shouting at the 'Varsity match. When a batsman scores a boundary hit, it yells with a sort of hysterical amusement, and follows the cry with a hum of applause; but when a batsman, and especially a prominent batsman, is bowled 'neck and heels,' it screams with a fiendish triumphant joy. If you are a supporter of the defeated cricketer, you wonder where your friends have disappeared to, for the whole ground seems for the moment to teem with the adversary. Charlie realised the meaning of that shout before his eyes fell on the shattered wicket; but, feeling that the least exhibition of dismay would be out of place in the Cambridge Captain, he merely said to his sister, 'Very unfortunate. I'm in at the fall of the next wicket; I'll go and put my pads on.' Then he made for the door at the back of the stand, and the Dean smiled quietly as he watched his attempts at wearing a look of unconcern whilst he ran the gauntlet; for it reminded him of his own failures in that respect more than twenty years ago.

Violet's eyes were glued to that unsightly wicket, and it was not until the umpire had repaired its lack of symmetry that she allowed herself to give vent to her feelings. Her voice choked with contempt as she whispered hoarsely to her father, 'First ball, and by Wharton's silly slow, too!'

Charlie had not left too soon. The next wicket fell almost at

once, and the Captain was called upon to make an effort. How he responded is now a matter of history, but his innings is chiefly memorable in the Marston family as forming the only occasion upon which the Dean's habitual calm deserted him. The old blue was not only oblivious of his rosette and gaiters, but of the presence of his neighbours. It was lucky for him that Charlie was a rapid scorer, or the excitement might have proved too much for him. The Cambridge innings closed at a quarter to five for 267, the Captain being not out 82. The Dean rushed from the stand to be in time to join in the reception which he knew awaited his son. A sporting minor canon would have stayed him at the door. 'A great son, sir, of a great sire.' The Dean just paused to reply, 'Isn't he a ripper, Hollis!' and then went at top speed towards the Pavilion.

But there were still more good things in store for Cambridge that day. Oxford had two hours' batting before close of play, and lost seven wickets for 110 runs in the time. No happier man and woman stepped into a hansom that evening than the Dean and his daughter, for Ward's 'duck' had passed out of Violet's thoughts, and only her brother's eighty-two remained. 'Speshul —groit innins by the Koimbridge capting!' yelled a small boy who was making superhuman efforts to be run over. He had brought his wares to the right market this time. 'Give them to me,' said Violet excitedly, and, thrusting half a crown into the child's hand, she relieved him of his armful. 'Bli me, Alf, if you ain't a knockout,' said an envious though admiring rival, who had witnessed the transaction. The pair increased their stock of papers at intervals on the way home, and loungers who had no visible form of occupation but to gape might have observed that evening a dignitary of the Church, recently appointed to a Deanery by a Tory Government, driving with a fashionably dressed young lady in a hansom, trimmed as it were with newspapers.

I have often thought that the chief error we make in our youth is not so much that we do the wrong thing, as that we do the right thing at the wrong time. If Jim Ward had consulted a friend, he never would have proposed to Violet Marston on that particular evening, although the fact of the Dean falling fast asleep after his excitement, and Charlie adjourning to write an account of the day's play to his mother, seemed to present an opportunity. Moreover, Jim was evidently out of form; but he felt down and lonely, and in want of sympathy, and realised for the first time how much he was in love with the girl. But a

picture does not lose anything by being set in a good frame, and Jim's surroundings that day, at any rate, helped him nothing. Moreover, he stated his case somewhat bluntly, and, what with the Dean waking up, and his own awkwardness, he was fain to put up with a 'Please don't say any more, Mr. Ward,' and to regard himself as defeated.

But when Violet went to bed that night the joy of four hours ago seemed to have evaporated, and she began to recognise that as far back as the previous Long Vacation the man she had somewhat hurriedly refused had begun to play a great part in her life. However, she tried to console herself with the doctrine of spilled milk, and, though she did not appear next morning at breakfast, she watched the day's play at Lord's. Tuesday was an uneventful day for Cambridge. Oxford did not save the follow on, for it never occurred to Charlie Marston to order the delivery of intentional wides. Then, at their second venture, the true batting form of the Oxford Eleven asserted itself, and they remained at the wickets till they were drawn. The last wicket fell almost on the stroke of seven o'clock, and Cambridge were left 211 runs to get to win on the following day. When the Dean got home from Lord's that night he was surprised to find that his wife had come back to town. That astute lady had not troubled herself much with the account which Charlie had written to her of Monday's play, but the remark 'Jim Ward is staying with us' had decided her on at once returning to duty. She fancied that she had observed a growing attachment between her daughter and the blue, and this state of affairs was by no means in accordance with her plans. She was not a little relieved to find that the two appeared hardly to take any notice of each other, either during dinner or afterwards; and this was the more satisfactory as she had determined on a forward policy at the Ashburns on the following night.

Like the preceding days, Wednesday was gloriously fine; but the wicket had crumbled a good deal, and the prophets were confident that Cambridge would not get the runs. And the start seemed to corroborate that view. Bowling very fast, with a slight wind to assist him, Wharton dismissed the first two batsmen for seven runs. The applause which greeted this performance had died away, and there was a breathless silence as Ward walked to the wicket for the second time in the match. 'Tell me as before, Vi,' said Charlie, as his head went down between his shoulders. But there was no need to tell him. He heard the shout—the right kind of shout this time—and he looked up just soon enough to see the ball dancing on the roof of the tennis

court. Wharton was young. He had done the right thing at the wrong time, and had again bowled the 'silly slow.' After that Jim fairly settled down to work. Ten after ten appeared on the telegraph-board, and, though five more Cambridge men were out, the score at the luncheon interval was 160 for seven wickets, with Ward not out 105. Charlie was one of the victims, and, though the chances were still in favour of Oxford, it was obvious that the spectators were 'in for a finish.'

Jim Ward took no part in the promenade which the M.C.C. so indulgently permit on the occasion of this fixture, and so Violet got no chance of congratulating him upon his performance. Long before a quarter to three the excited crowd settled down to await the end, and even the appearance of the umpires was greeted with a cheer. The cheering was renewed as the Oxford Eleven took the field, nor were the light blue batsmen forgotten as they emerged from the Pavilion. Thence to the end the game was played to the accompaniment of deafening shouts. 'The noise is quite unbearable, Wilfred,' Mrs. Marston plaintively moaned; 'don't you think we'd better get away before the crush?' Fortunately, the Dean did not hear her, or he might have been lured into a rejoinder which would have not been becoming either in a husband or a clerk in holy orders.

The two hundred was posted, and only eleven runs were now required; but at this total Jim Ward's long innings came to an end. Getting rather too much under a slow ball, he failed to lift it over the ropes, and was magnificently caught in the deep field. Great batsmen have received great receptions on return to the Pavilion at Lord's before now, but the greeting accorded to Jim Ward for his innings of 141 in the 'Varsity Match still holds the record for unanimity and enthusiasm. 'Superb!' said the Dean. 'Bring him round here, and let us congratulate him. He hasn't been near us during the match since Monday.'

And Violet added, in a low voice and as steadily as possible, 'Yes, Charlie, tell Mr. Ward that I should like to tell him how much we appreciated his innings.' But the state of affairs was now too exciting to admit of further talk for the moment. Five of the required runs were obtained, and as Jim Ward, in obedience to the summons, entered the door of the members' enclosure, accompanied by his captain, the ninth wicket fell. In the breathing space thus afforded the occupants of the stand recognised the arrival of the hero of the match, and gave him a little impromptu reception. There was a seat vacant next to those occupied by the Marstons, and Jim sat down. The Dean

THE END OF THE SECOND INNINGS

monopolised him at once, and if the candid admiration of one who has made a name is grateful to him who is making one, Jim Ward should have felt very happy. 'Yes, my boy,' the old blue concluded, feeling perhaps that there was an opportunity to moralise, 'there's nothing in life like a second innings, and it isn't every man who gets one.' And a little sad voice murmured very softly, 'Nor every woman, either.' If Jim had possessed the wand of Abanazar he would have instantly dissolved into space every human being on the ground (together with all records of that famous match if necessary) except the owner of that little voice. As it was, for the moment he was in danger of forgetting his surroundings, but the burst of applause which greeted the arrival of the last Cambridge batsman brought him to his senses. All eyes were now rivetted on the play, and, under the miserable subterfuge of tying his boot-lace, Jim whispered (and his voice sounded very musical to the girl), 'Oh! there must be a second innings, Vi. If I dared to—would you—?' And he paused abruptly. It was easier to him to make another century than to conclude that request. And, low as was Violet's reply, he heard it. 'Yes, Jim, I'm so sorry about the other time.' The concluding five minutes of the match were responsible for increased shouting, ill-suppressed swearing, and some approach to apoplectic fits; though, to their everlasting disgrace, two cricket enthusiasts in the members' stand had no share in the wild excitement that surrounded them. But this was no time to consider the faces or demeanour of mere spectators. Six runs were still required, and an uppish stroke by the new arrival secured two of them. Wharton's next ball was perilously adjacent to the stumps, and then came the end. The last ball of the over was sent down, but unfortunately it was on the leg side, and, eluding the wicket-keeper's clutches, it sped on its way towards the Pavilion rails. If it reached them, the necessary four runs would accrue. But the moment that ball was delivered, short slip had scented the danger and had started in the required direction. Williams, the man in pursuit, had run many great races for Oxford (for he was their first string for both the hundred yards and the quarter), but he never ran better than on this occasion. The ball had already begun to slow down, and the sprinter was gaining at every stride. The men in the Pavilion rose and adjured the competitors. 'Come along, come along! Trickle away, my little beauty!' yelled the Cantabs. 'Run, Williams, run for your life!' screamed the Oxford contingent. 'I was only beaten by a foot. I ought to have done it,' Williams sorrowfully informed the eager reporter, but the hunted

little lump of leather just managed to find sanctuary in the Pavilion gate, and the 'Varsity match had ended in a victory for Cambridge by the narrow margin of one wicket.

Then the crowd poured over the ground and rushed towards the Pavilion. On their way those on the right of the field of play had to pass the members' enclosure, and a lynx-eyed youth recognised Jim Ward. 'There he is!' he yelled, and in less than a minute the century-maker was the object of a wildly enthusiastic demonstration. Charlie Marston modestly moved away, and his example was followed by others. 'Quite right,' said the Dean, as he edged off quickly; 'the crowd like to have their man all to themselves.' And so, deserted by his friends and holding his cap in his hand, Jim Ward bowed his acknowledgments to his admirers, and looked extremely uncomfortable in doing so. One supporter, however, remained staunch. 'I'm not going to move, Jim. I've a sort of share in this reception, you know,' she whispered; and when an excited postman, drawing a bow at a venture, shouted, 'Three cheers for the young lady, too!' and the crowd responded, she was shameless enough to smile and make no pretence of even looking embarrassed. The din of the last hour had tried Mrs. Marston severely; but this focussing of it, as it were, in her own immediate neighbourhood proved the last straw. 'Well, Violet,' she exclaimed, as the stand emptied and the crowd surged on towards the Pavilion, 'are you going to sit there all the afternoon? Haven't you had enough noise for one day? Remember we've to go to the Ashburns to-night.' Violet didn't sit any more. Rising, and looking rather rebellious, she faced her mother. 'Personally, mother, I've enjoyed the noise; and I don't think I shall go to the Ashburns, as Jim mightn't like it. As we are going to be married, he ought to be consulted, you know.' Neither sapience nor tact was Mrs. Marston's strong point, but she was wise enough on this occasion to avoid direct reply. The Dean, however, feeling perhaps that the situation demanded a recognition of some sort from one in authority, took refuge in Latin.

'What does your father say, Charlie?' gasped Mrs. Marston faintly. The Cambridge Captain came to the rescue. 'The first part of the remark is from Ovid or Horace, or one of those chaps, mother, and means that history repeats itself; but the latter part,' he added, with an indulgent smile, 'is, I should say, the dear old dad's own. By *vis cæruleensis* I believe he means to convey something about "the power of a blue."'

THE LAWS OF LAWN TENNIS

BY E. H. JOHNSTONE

ONCE again the Lawn Tennis season is in progress, and the old familiar article assuring us of the decease of the game as a popular pastime has heralded its advent. It may be granted that the ranks of its followers have been thinned by deserters to the attractions of cycling and of golf, and that, as a fashionable amusement, Lawn Tennis has had its day; but to keen players this weeding out process may prove—nay, has proved—a blessing in disguise, in that 'garden-party' *pat-ball* is now to all intents and purposes a thing of the past. The fact that the game has lived through ten years of such caricature is ample testimony to its vitality.

From all accounts the prospects of the present season are excellent; clubs are filling well, tournaments are numerous if not too prosperous, and we shall probably be able to welcome some American players—whose presence will give a decided fillip to the meetings they attend—if Spain does not object. Above all, there appears to be a possibility of the Lawn Tennis Association awakening to the fact that, as the governing body of the game, it has not in the past done all that might have been expected of it in the way of organisation and legislation.

Probably no game ever suffered more from the apathy of its followers than Lawn Tennis. Old hands will remember that it took the small coterie of ardent spirits, who then held sway over its destiny, from 1884 to 1887 to galvanise the main body of players into sufficient energy to induce them to form an Association at all, and since its formation it has received but little

support from clubs and players in general, although it has been up to the present preserved from absolute extinction by the fortunate and timely appearance of a Scrivener or a Collins, ready and willing to devote time and trouble to the furthering of its interests.

As a result the policy of the Association has so far been one of masterly inactivity, the effect of which, at one time, bade fair to prove disastrous, and would probably have done so, but for the inherent lasting qualities of the game itself. The worst, however, is now past. All that is required to place it on a thoroughly sound footing is a little life and energy on the part of the governing body. Committees might be formed in the large centres as a means of introducing secretaries, and consequently clubs, to one another; the dates of matches and, more especially, tournaments might be settled at meetings of these local secretaries in council, and in many other minor details the sport might be placed on a more business-like footing, which would be sure to increase its popularity. Lawn tennis, since one of its chief charms is the encountering of different opponents on *good* grounds, is one of those games for the enjoyment of which the formation of clubs is an absolute necessity, and to engineer a club, and maintain it prosperously, publicity is essential--the more publicity the better.

Next to organisation—or perhaps one should say, with organisation—the most important function of the L.T.A. is legislation, and in this respect the council, although evidently aware of the necessity of reform, is apparently unable to make up its mind as to the method to be employed.

In two or three respects there is room for improvement. From the very earliest days of the game, the service rule has proved a stumbling-block. Originally, when the net was some enormous height at the sides, the service line was, I believe, five-and-twenty feet from the centre of the court, and although this has been reduced to twenty-one feet, the latter-day method of madly rushing to the net at the earliest available opportunity—and ofttimes without the opportunity at all—has made the fact that an advantage is held by the server, especially in doubles, so palpable, that some alteration is evidently necessary.

As the game is now conducted, the player who first reaches the net may as a general rule be said to have the better chance of winning the ace; and, as the striker-out is prohibited from volleying the service, the server must in some way be penalised to counteract the advantage. In singles the conditions are much

more equal than in doubles, seeing that unless the service be very well placed and the server exceedingly active, he runs a considerable risk of being either passed down the side lines or beaten by a lob. It is very questionable, therefore, whether any alteration in the rule is, as yet, really necessary in this branch of the game.

In doubles, however, there can be no doubt about the matter. To paraphrase an old proverb, '*position* is nine points of the law,' and with his partner already in his place at the net, the server has comparatively little of the court to cover while one of his opponents is for the time being inevitably at a disadvantage, in that he cannot play the ball until the server is well under-way.

A further objection to the present rule is that it is often difficult for the umpire to decide whether a delivery is a foot-fault or not. He cannot watch the server's feet and his racket at the same time, and it is therefore next to impossible for him to determine whether or not the ball was actually struck before both feet were inside the court.

In America, where double play has reached an even higher standard than in this country, many expedients have been tried with but indifferent success, and undeniably the question is a difficult one. Two courses are open to the reformer—to put the server further back, or to keep him longer at the base line. The general opinion, based on experiment, is that to make the former plan efficacious, the new line would require to be set so far behind the present base line that the service would be ruined, and the server placed at an actual disadvantage. It remains, therefore to devise some method by which the server may be kept longer at the base line, and it is suggested as a means of doing this, that the service rule be made to read as follows:

'The server shall stand with one foot *on the ground* beyond (*i.e.* further from the net than) the base line, and with the other foot upon the base line, and shall deliver a service from the right and left courts alternately, beginning from the right.'

The only alteration from the present rule is the addition of the italicised words; but the fact of the server having to start from a standing position would in all probability sufficiently retard his progress to the net to neutralise the advantage he now possesses over the striker-out. The amendment would naturally be strenuously opposed by the 'rush and thump' style of server, and would certainly penalise those who have cultivated an exceedingly fast service; but, as is the case in larger spheres, the few must suffer for the many, and the good of the game should be held superior to all personal considerations. Umpires would hail

the change with delight, for that preliminary canter to the base line, which has worried them individually and collectively for so long, would be effectually prevented, and their work would, in respect of the validity of a service, at any rate, be reduced from a question of opinion to one of fact.

This is a consummation devoutly to be wished; there are more pleasant things in the world than the knowledge that the unfortunate necessity of foot-faulting a player has put him off his game, lost him the match, and in all probability made you an enemy, for as with l.b.w. in cricket, no man, in his own opinion, ever does serve a foot-fault.

In theory the amended rule would meet all requirements, but theory is not practice, and before any definite alteration is made it would be as well to give the new idea a trial, if only to discover in what way the ingenious ones would contrive to evade its restrictions. Surely it is, at any rate, worth putting to the test, and if the Lawn Tennis Association were to appoint a committee of experts to make practical experiment of this and any other likely suggestions, some more satisfactory law than that now existing would probably be evolved.

A more radical reformer proposes the total excision from the rules of any reference to faults, allowing one service only; but this hardly seems likely to answer the purpose. It is only amongst 'class' players that the service is of such distinct advantage, and they would be but little affected by the loss of the second shot. Even now in doubles it is not very frequently used. Poor and indifferent players, on the other hand, would be tremendously handicapped, and although it has been suggested that to some extent this drawback could be overcome by increasing the number of strokes necessary to win a game, it is more than doubtful whether, in point of fact, this would be in favour of the weaker side even were the handicap points proportionately increased, while it would involve a substantial alteration in the constitution of the game—a most dangerous move in the present chaotic state of affairs.

While the rule defining the position of the server is the one most urgently requiring amendment, there are others which would, in the opinion of many, be none the worse for revision. Rule 16, for instance, provides that a let shall be given if a service, otherwise good, touches the top of the net, but according to the present regulations such a stroke at any other period of a rest counts as a good return. Why?

Like everything else, of course, it works both ways, and any

rule is equally fair to both sides; but would not the game be better if, in every case where the ball touched the net and subsequently came over in court, a let were allowed? Nothing is more annoying than to have the ball deflected just an inch or two as the result of contact with the net, when in the middle of, say, a round of close volleying. Your stroke is almost invariably spoiled, and your opponents score a possibly underserved point. On the other hand, it would undeniably be hard when a stroke was practically won to lose it because the ball happened to touch the tape. This is, however, a contingency much less likely to occur.

Taken all round it seems to me that it would unquestionably be fairer to count all net balls as 'lets:' certainly it seems absurd that the advantage should only be allowed on the service when the ball is limited to a small portion of the court and cannot be volleyed. Surely it is a matter of much more difficulty and importance when once the rest has been fairly started.

One of the great attractions of the game to many of us is that the element of chance enters into it to a smaller extent than in almost any other sport, and if net balls were systematically disallowed it would practically disappear altogether.

I am aware that the amendment has been suggested before, and defeated on vote, but I venture to think that these are more enlightened days, and that a strong council *of players* would find themselves practically unanimous in approving the alteration.

It is more than possible that the desired improvements can be brought about by methods very much more efficacious than those here proposed; but the purpose of this article will be more than answered if only it stirs players who are more competent to deal with its subject to the energetic discussion of the few weak points which, even according to its most ardent devotees, Lawn Tennis still possesses.

LOAFING ON THE LIMPOPO

BY O. E. VON ERNSTHAUSEN

BEFORE the plentiful discovery of gold interfered with the shooting, South Africa was the Eldorado of the sportsman. Even now, although you have to go further north for a koodoo than the mighty hunters of old for an elephant, you can find excellent sport within easy reach, together with that most exhilarating pleasure, camp life, which is as satisfying a reality as ever anticipation promised. If you are a friend of insects, trees, and river-fish as well as a shot, I can imagine no happier time for you than a month or so on the Limpopo.

I hardly consider it necessary (having no map handy) to insult you with geographical details; you can look out what you want yourself. The Limpopo is easily found, if not by that name, then as the Crocodile River. Following its course ran the old route north, but the coach and transport riders took a straighter line, and left this most beautiful river to itself and anybody with enough time to loiter on its banks. Consequently, you meet hardly any human beings near it, with exception of a stray native or two, and sometimes a Boer family on the trek. The increase in animal life is therefore very marked, and while four-footed game is still too scarce to make its pursuit there the object of a visit, it is a very paradise of birds. Quail, snipe, partridge (especially the little namaqua), pheasant, korrhahn, wild duck and goose, the little locust bird and others abound, but above all you will find more guinea-fowl here than anywhere else in the world.

OUR RIVER

The South African guinea-fowl is, however, a very difficult bird to get at. Not only are its legs of the longest, and its speed something enormous, but its wits are very keen. It will perceive you at great distances, and, making off through the tall grass like a locomotive, never rises until it has a good stout tree between it and you in the direct line of fire. On the whole, the guinea-fowl prefers its legs to its wings, and only rises as a last resource. I have seen a man galloping after such an one on a fast horse unable to overtake it.

Occasionally, however, you come across a flock of young 'uns, who lack experience of the gun. We once found such in a large open space of grass, when they got up at once, and we walked them right across, getting a rise every fifty yards or so, and killing (three guns) nearly eighty in a short space of time. Lest you should blame us for indiscriminate slaughter far from Leadenhall Market, let me tell you that our party consisted of four white men, nine niggers, and 'between' twenty dogs, and that our larder was not always too full, for we ate what we killed every time.

The subject of food is always fascinating, but in connection with a large moving camp far from any base of supplies it becomes naturally of the first importance. And where could you find better appetites and better implements for their gratification than in the bush? Let me try to picture our arrival in camp and our dinner.

We are riding on our last trek for the day; time about 9.30. Notwithstanding the heat of the day, it sometimes gets very chilly towards night-time in the bush, and the extreme variation of temperature between noon and midnight renders you more sensible to this than it might elsewhere. Besides, riding at a slow walk is not conducive to warmth; and although we are doing our duty by travelling as late as the moon and consideration for our oxen will allow, we are all thinking of the camp fire with feelings of the liveliest and most pleasant anticipation. An exceptionally favourable spot for camping at last definitely convinces us that it is better to warm your chilly blood by a roaring blaze than to freeze your toes by contact with icy stirrup-irons. The waggons are quickly drawn up, one a little to the left, the others side by side. The boys are collecting the dry wood wholesale while we are offsaddling and blanketing our steeds, looking longingly at the first spark with which our cook kindles the dry grass.

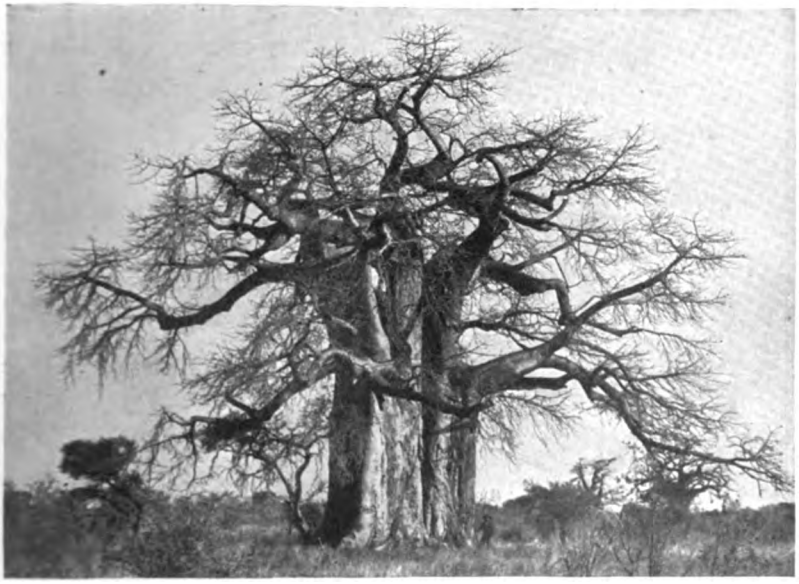
All around is the dark bush, a jumbled mass of Mapani, palm,

fern and tall grass sprinkled with thorn, while a large and many-forked leviathan rising suddenly out of the lower thickets, here or there, towers black against the star-spangled darkness, and indicates the course of the flowing Crocodile. The tented waggons

ON THE ROAD

are but indistinct bodies, turned by fruitful fancy into monstrous denizens of mysterious African forests; the oxen, stretched around, are chewing the cud in silent reflection, while the horses dip deeply into the nightly nosebag.

As I come up with my camp-chair the first big log is caught by the blaze, the waggons start out into strong relief with their white tenting clearly defined on the dark sky, the horses neigh approvingly as they turn their eyes to the welcome light, and the figures of my 'comrades in arms' are distinct around the fire. After a small—a very small—nip of 'Black Usher,' we settle in the easy canvas of our chairs, and watch 'John' busy with the great pot preparing the feast at the open gap left by our semi-circle of chairs. The almost tuneful odour of partridge, korrhahn, and bush-buck, stewing in peaceful harmony with rice, potatoes, and onions, sets our lips smacking in pleasant anticipation. We



GIANT BAOBAB

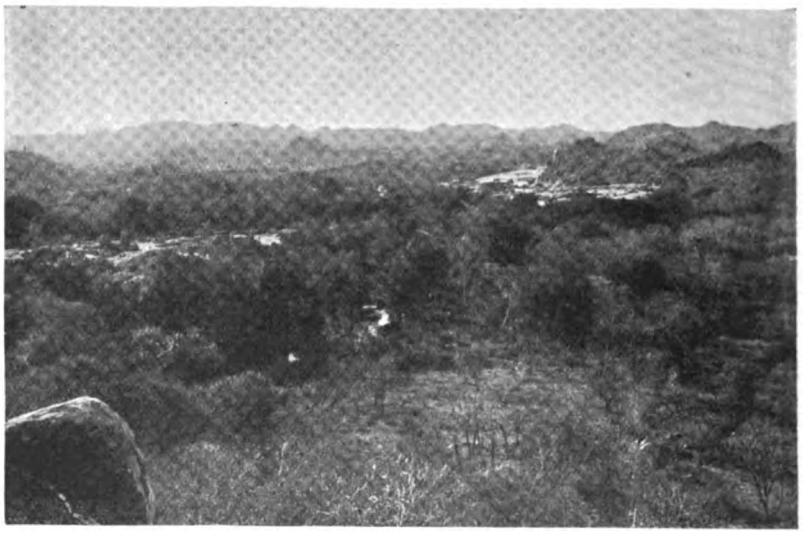
baked that morning, the bread is fresh, and the warm, moist tea, which is so good when made with the clear limpid waters of the Palala or Maghalequin, is like a benediction—a feast for a king.

Filled with good cheer and warmth, we throw more wood on the fire, as one after another our pipes begin to glow and the sweet smoke ascends complacently, while the monotonous sing-song at the 'boys'' fire, like the buzzing of drowsy bees, gives a finish to the perfect peace of the night.

Having once mentioned food, let me add that the liver of a fresh-killed buck—preferably a bush-buck—fried with bacon is

about the most delicious tit-bit in the world. But about its supply? I have already mentioned the scarcity of four-footed as contrasted with the abundant supply of feathered game. This is due no doubt to the Boers, who disdain the use of a gun and shoot merely with the rifle, so that birds are only snared by them, or by the natives. I *have* seen a small Dutch boy kill pheasants accurately with a catapult, but such instances of skill are very rare.

Although ample *meat* can generally be secured for the larder, the hunter of *heads* will have to go further afield than the Transvaal for his collection. I had the unexampled luck to



A GLIMPSE OF THE RIVER

secure one of the most splendid koodoo heads known, just beyond the border of Mashonaland; but such a chance is, as I have said, very rare, and you may hunt these regions for months without securing a fair specimen. Whenever we *did* get a head worth preserving, we thrust it into one of the numerous large ant-heaps, and in a few hours the skull showed white and perfectly clean. The excitement of lions was not ours; we occasionally heard their mighty roar in the night chorused by the angry voices of hyænas, but although I once followed a spoor for two days, I had no luck. When we started out the lion had been ruthlessly persecuted in the Transvaal, and for years not a single one had been seen. During our trip for some reason or another

the shooting of 'kings' was prohibited by the Republic, and the same night the decree was issued a lion came across from Mashonaland at Rhodes Drift, and took a horse from a store-keeper. No better proof of animal intelligence has ever been adduced, I think!

The great enemy of the hunter in South Africa is a small bird, a sort of parroquet, which sits about on all trees, and is always close by any game. This dreadful creature no sooner sees a man with a gun than it begins croaking, and immediately all game in the vicinity take the hint and leave. Its note sounds exactly like 'Gō away-a-ay,' and it is therefore

OUR SWIMMING BATH

known by the name of the 'Go-away-bird.' Strangely enough it does not care how many birds you shoot, as long as you keep away from its four-footed friends.

A welcome addition to our larder was found in the delicious honey of the wild bees, of which we frequently had the luck to discover a good supply, the nest being either in rotting tree trunks, where we could smoke the bees out, or more often hanging from a branch high up like a small football. In the latter case a well-directed gunshot generally brought it down plump into the open bucket held ready to receive it.

As implied by its alias, the Limpopo was formerly unpleasantly famed for a large supply of very greedy crocodiles; but

civilisation has, as always, while looking after communal safety, deprived the sportsman, and we were assured that the whole length of the river contained no single specimen. Nevertheless, I had a most exciting encounter with one of these tearful terrors, and although we did not come into personal contact, our relations were unpleasantly close.

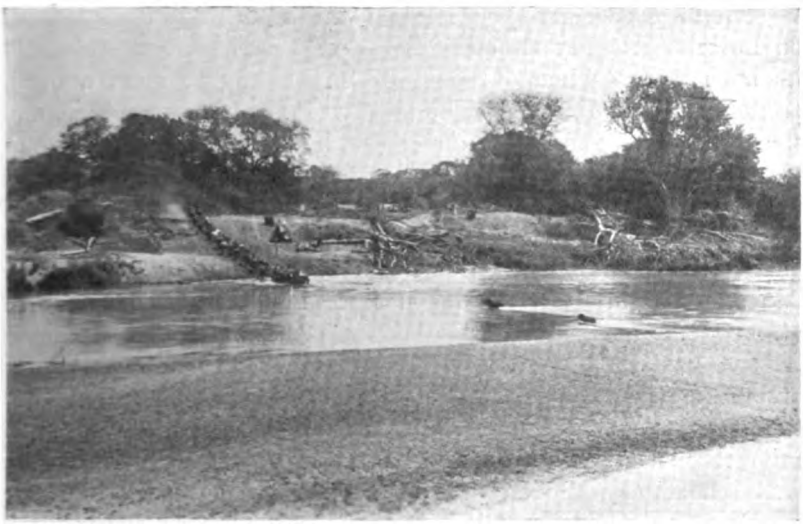
Every morning, and often during the day, it was our custom to go for a swim in the main river, whenever we were not close enough to one of its numerous tributaries (where clear water and beautiful sandy or clean pebbly bottoms made so much more

WHERE THE FISH BITE!

desirable a bath). On one occasion I had got half way across the stream with my pointer (an uncommonly good water dog) swimming behind, when I was startled by sudden terrific yells from the bank, where my drying friends had spotted a crocodile. To say I was frightened is putting it very mildly. Although he might not take all of me, the crocodile would *surely* get a leg or two, and then how was I to get back? To do anything was of course useless, yet I turned round to reswim my track, and it was then that my gallant little dog, even if involuntarily, saved my life by giving up his own. My eyes came round in time to see him disappear below the surface, together with the jaws of the

dining crocodile. It would be needless to add that I made my best speed back, where I could bewail my great loss in that personal security which selfish human nature needs for the exercise of its grief. There is certainly no doubt that, but for the presence of the dog, his fate would have been mine, and so the characteristic trait of the crocodile which always attacks the smaller animal when there is any choice, spared me a watery (?) grave.

Such excitements were, however, not the rule with us. Moving slowly but surely forward, following the course of the Limpopo as nearly as possible, in the enjoyment of perfect



CROSSING RHODES' DRIFT INTO MASHONALAND

nature, the excitement was all for the poor wild creatures upon whom we exercised our skill in shooting. Occasionally camping in a place for two or three days, we were generally gently on the move : a trek in the early morning and one in the evening, with sometimes an extra one thrown in. During the early morning and late afternoon we would go forth to kill, a four hours' tramp or ride, now alone, now in couples ; in the noonday heat a doze in the shadow of our tents or in the shallows of the river provided the needful rest, the necessity for which our nights did not always fully supply.

The ease with which you can lose yourself in the bush is something marvellous. Not ten yards from camp and out of

sight of the waggons, you will suddenly discover that your whereabouts are no longer known to you, and unless you have luck, you may go on wandering about homeless for hours, if not for ever. On the other hand, the instinct of the native is equally astonishing. We blindfolded one of our boys, spun him round many times, and then walked him in devious line for more than a mile. When we stopped and removed his bandage, he headed straight for the camp, which he reached without having to swerve an inch from his course. With some practice and a small compass, however, I managed to find home without assistance after a time, and could give up asking for a guide by shots.

The most exciting sport I found in the hunting of small buck on horseback. My shooting horse was well trained and knew its business, so when out on him I had only to start a buck, and off we were directly. The pace was always tremendous, and the going most uncertain; ant-heaps, holes, trees, great tracts of 'Wait-a-bit' thorn flashed by like telegraph poles in a train, and it was all I could do to keep my rifle from being knocked out of my hand, or myself out of the saddle, while the ever-present chance of a tumble by the horse added considerably to the danger. The first opportunity that presented itself was of course at once used for a pot at the quarry, either from the saddle or after a hasty dismount. In the majority of cases you return empty handed, for both ground and speed are against you, but the chase is therefore none the less exciting, and the joy following a rare success all the keener. I secured a beautiful bushbuck with a head, as well as a 'wildebeest' or gnu in this manner.

During the two months we spent on the Limpopo we met white men on two occasions only. The first was a very ancient Dutch farmer, who had been out for a shoot, and was tramping back to his farm, some thirty miles or so. His battery consisted of an old Martini-Henry carbine, which, as he told us, he had taken from an English soldier at (I think) Bronkers Spruit. With this he was still as effective a hunter and marksman as the best of us with the newest thing in sporting rifles. The conversation drifting naturally to shooting, and a flock of wild geese passing high up, he handed the rifle to one of my companions, and asked him boastingly to show him what an Englishman could do with it. My friend put the rifle to his shoulder, and fired without aiming, when, to nobody's greater surprise than his own, a goose came tumbling down with her neck shot off. Although *we* all saw how it was done, the impression made on the old man was

one of most gratifying astonishment and belief in our ability, and the fame of this exploit afterwards spread throughout the country. Needless to say, our friend never again consented to publicly display his great powers before an eager and admiring audience, and his reputation rests secure to this day.

Some three weeks later we met a Boer family on the move from winter to summer quarters, with whom we passed some pleasant hours. Indeed, all these wandering Transvaalers are simple and kindly people, and but for their dirt would be the best of companions; asking nothing of life except food and

NATIVE VILLAGE IN THE TRANSVAAL

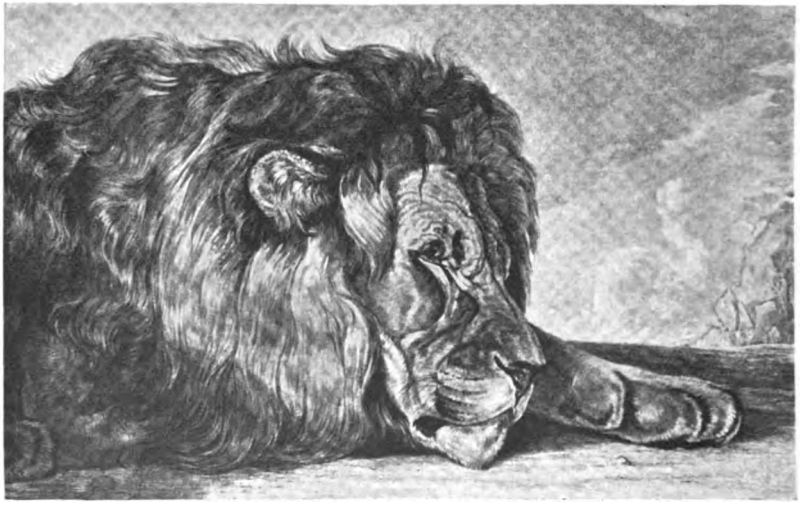
cartridges to shoot it with, they lead happy and contented existences, hardly ever going near a town, making 'coffee' from the seeds of the Baobab fruit, and trusting for sugar (their only luxury) and ammunition to a swop with passing strangers. With this family was a little boy of eight, who had never in his life seen a house. The father was a bit of a politician, and seized the occasion to inquire about the intentions of his government. He was much troubled about Oom Paul, who, he had heard, was getting terribly English in his habits. 'Was it true,' he asked, 'that the president took off his trousers when he went to bed? If he had already so far shaken off the traditions of his fore-

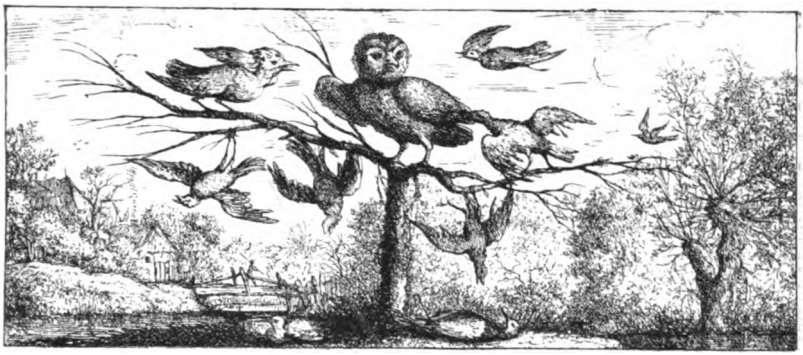
fathers, where would he stop, did we think?' We assured him that old Oom Paul had never yet been seen without his traditions, and so left him at peace.

This family were actually enterprising enough to manufacture butter, a very rare occurrence with these lazy nomads, who will make no exertion, even for their own comfort, and so we brought a welcome addition to the menu away with us.

Let us inspan once more and go on our way. No, on second thoughts I think it better to pull up.

My unskilled pen has not been able to depict for you either the unsurpassable beauties of our river, nor the extent and pleasure of our sport, nor the great joys of our wandering life, but I hope I have shown you how and where to pass the most pleasant of months for yourself by loafing on the Limpopo.





THE REFLECTIONS OF A CRICKET BALL

BY HAROLD MACFARLANE

I CONFESS that until I was picked out from a number of companions by an umpire of—I trust no one will accuse me of covert self-praise—the greatest discernment, I had no idea that I possessed the power of reading the thoughts of others. I admit frankly the discovery has pained me not a little, for I soon found out that the faculty was not discretionary, but obligatory, which placed me in a position most painful for one whose aim in life is to keep aloof from other people's affairs, and avoid mixing itself in anything not concerned with it—wickets excepted.

You see, when I was taken up the umpire was thinking, 'The glass as high as St. Paul's and as steady as Shrewsbury: a perfect wicket and a blazing hot sun—if that doesn't mean three days' play, my name's not—' No! I will not give his name away. I struggled to dissociate my thoughts from his, but it was an impossibility. I believe in his early days this particular umpire was said to have 'a great command over the ball.' He has still.

He continued: 'For three days must I watch a set of overgrown schoolboys peddle about with bat and ball, not one of them playing within pounds of his real form through sheer nervousness, and all the time my fingers 'll be itching to send her down in the sweet old way—coming in sharply from the off. Ah! I was shelved much too soon.'

I had always been brought up with the highest respect for umpires, and the knowledge that even umpires were as other men troubled me sorely; it was a great relief when he took

me from his pocket and sent me careering over the turf to the captain of the incoming team, but my heart sank (figuratively speaking, for in reality I was true to the core) when I saw that he wore no beard. I had so counted on being used in an International match, and my chances of enjoying an honoured and silver-mounted old age as an inkstand were then very remote, unless there happened to be a Cobden or a Ridley in either team.

The captain ran forward to meet me in my flight, and as soon as I touched his fingers I became aware that he was calling himself 'a boiled owl' for having cried 'heads' when he had won the toss on the last two occasions with 'tails.' He might have known, he said to himself, that there was 'never a second without a third.' And then he hoped to goodness that Franklin wouldn't send down as many long hops to leg as he did last year before he got his eye in.

I was becoming interested in this man, when he pretended to throw me to his companion on the right, but in reality I went to his left-hand neighbour, who expressed a wish that he should 'go on' first, as it might make all the difference between winning and losing the match. I should have been pleased to have known his reason for thinking that, but he elected to bowl me at the wickets, which he missed; so I lost the thread of his thoughts during my journey to the screen at the nursery end of the ground, whence I was jerked back by Policeman Z 42, who fervently hoped that his helmet wouldn't fall off with the exertion.

It was strange how many petitions were being forwarded to the Fates just about that time. Long-off, who fielded me, assured himself that it was the poorest sort of skittles to shunt him from his usual position because the bowling had been strengthened by the inclusion of a new man who was no good as a field and had to go mid-on. He never could get used to that beastly Pavilion, and he felt sure that, should a catch be sent him early in the game, he would be certain to lose sight of it against the building, and utterly misjudge the flight of the ball. He expressed a pious wish that no catches would be sent his way.

The thoughts that passed through the minds of the players I came in contact with during the first few overs were entirely of the game, but a smart bit of fielding at point made that gentleman wonder if Maud had arrived, and if she had been watching him. Point didn't half like Maud being with the Brabazon-Smiths, and he distinctly objected to Captain Hugh Brabazon-Smith, but for what reason I had not time to discover, for 'over' being called I was trundled up to the bowler's end, and the

batsman placing his bat at a pleasing inclination, I deftly ran up the blade and found myself in the fingers of that gentleman, who examined my seams with the eye of a connoisseur.

But this gentleman was not thinking of me or my seams; in very sooth I was somewhat puzzled at the current of his thoughts, which were mathematically inclined. 'If it were only pounds not guineas it would have been so simple,' he thought, 'and even at guineas it was simple enough until I made that four square. Twenty-three times one is twenty-three; put down three and carry one—that makes twenty-four pounds three shillings for the—' and then I passed into a strange hand.

'"Don't send any trial balls down, but buzz 'em in anyhow." What on earth is Tommy about! If it's a wide and goes to the boundary, he's got himself to blame.'

The rapidity of my flight through the air took my breath away. I touched the end of a bat, passed like a flash into the slips, and the next thing I remember is finding myself in a somewhat capacious hand, the owner of which said to himself, 'That was about the rankest ball I've seen this year, but it did the trick. One for thirty-two—I shall take him off at the end of this over.'

How opinions differ! The moment after I got into the hand of the bowler I found that he was congratulating himself on having bowled the best ball he had sent down in his life. Evidently the captain had entirely misjudged the ball. It had been sent down rather off-wicket on purpose to make the batsman hit, and the pitch was erratic for the same reason. 'What was the good of bowling a good length ball dead on the wicket to a batsman who was well set?—he would simply play it. It requires a head-ball to get a man like that out. One ball, no runs, one wicket.'

Without doubt the captain had misunderstood the bowler's intention. The remainder of the over was not quite so successful. The new-comer, I learned from the trundler, had no idea of how to bat; two balls, which he ought to have played towards cover-point and mid-off, he had pulled in the most disgusting manner to the leg boundary for four apiece, and the last ball of the over, which all but bowled him, he had flukily snicked for a single. 'It was pretty, perhaps, but it wasn't cricket.'

Now the man at the other end was quite a different kind of bowler. He was simply longing to be hit, and he was quite annoyed that the batsman would only send him all along the carpet for singles. He had not long to wait, however, for the

player who did not know how to bat landed me through a window of the Pavilion, and I was lovingly picked up by an old gentleman who was thinking of that hit he made in the same match forty years ago—'a sixer out of the ground. How poor dear Fanny did applaud; she showed me her gloves afterwards, and I—' The poor old gentleman's spectacles were quite dim as he jerked me back into the field, imperilling several top-hats.

I wondered, as point picked me up after long-off had furthered my progress, whether Fanny gave my old acquaintance as much cause for uneasiness as Maud was giving the man who held me. Captain Brabazon-Smith *was* with Maud; they were seated on the box-seat of the Smiths' landau, and some girls were never happy unless they were flirting. 'It was all so different during Eights week. Maud had been so pleasant—but all women were the same; "out of sight out of mind" was their motto, and it was about time for a change of bowling.'

Then he dropped me and rolled up his sleeves industriously and pointedly.

'This will be a sixer or out,' thought the slow trundler as he started to trot towards the crease; and a moment later I thought it was annihilation; but on recovering my scattered senses I perceived that Lord's was still in existence, but was rapidly fading out of sight.

I got an excellent ball's-eye view of the roof of the Pavilion and the tennis-court during my journey upwards, and I was congratulating myself on achieving the height of my ambition; in fact, the words, 'Great Scott! I'm a sixer,' had barely passed through my mind when I perceived a strange phenomenon. Lord's and the surrounding neighbourhood were rising rapidly after me, so rapidly that a collision between one of them and me was a matter of time only. I also saw a figure in white sprinting in my direction, and a number of spectators were shrinking away as if they thought that there was nothing between them and total destruction but an *en tout cas*. It was a very exciting moment for me, for I perceived that either Lord's or myself would receive a very nasty blow, and I felt sorry for Lord's; but just as the collision appeared imminent, something came between me and the ground, and someone thought, 'By Jove! I've got it—I wish the mater had seen that.' Then I sailed up in the air as a graceful acknowledgment of all the applause I had received for my remarkable performance, and a white-haired gentleman said aloud, 'That's the best bit of fielding I've seen since Webbe caught Lyttelton close to this spot, and that was in '75.'

There's not a bit of doubt about it, I was a ball of no ordinary attainments.

After that everything seemed a bit tame, but there was one incident that I must just record as being of interest. It was later in the innings, and the bowling having got into somewhat of a tangle, the captain -'as a last resource' threw me to point, who promptly expressed his intention of showing Maud that, although he wasn't in the army, he could bowl a good length ball for all that. The next moment I heard a little scream, and a voice said, 'It's all right—I've got it,' and another voice said, 'O Hugh!—if it hadn't been for you I might have been killed. How stupid of Frank to bowl a ball like that!' and shortly after that the innings and my cricket career were brought to a conclusion.

As I was thinking over the events of the day I was picked up by an individual, who was wondering how much he could get for me, and who said, 'This is the ball, sir. You have a friend perhaps playing?' 'Yes,' said the other; 'how much shall we say for it?' 'Oh! nothing—nothing,' said the individual, who was thinking that it ought to mean a sovereign. 'Thank you, sir, much obliged,' he continued; and a sovereign it was, and I changed hands.

'Have you got it, darling?'

'Here it is, sweetest. But, Maud, what shall we do with it?'

'You dear old Hugh!—why! we will have it mounted with a silver plate on it, and—'

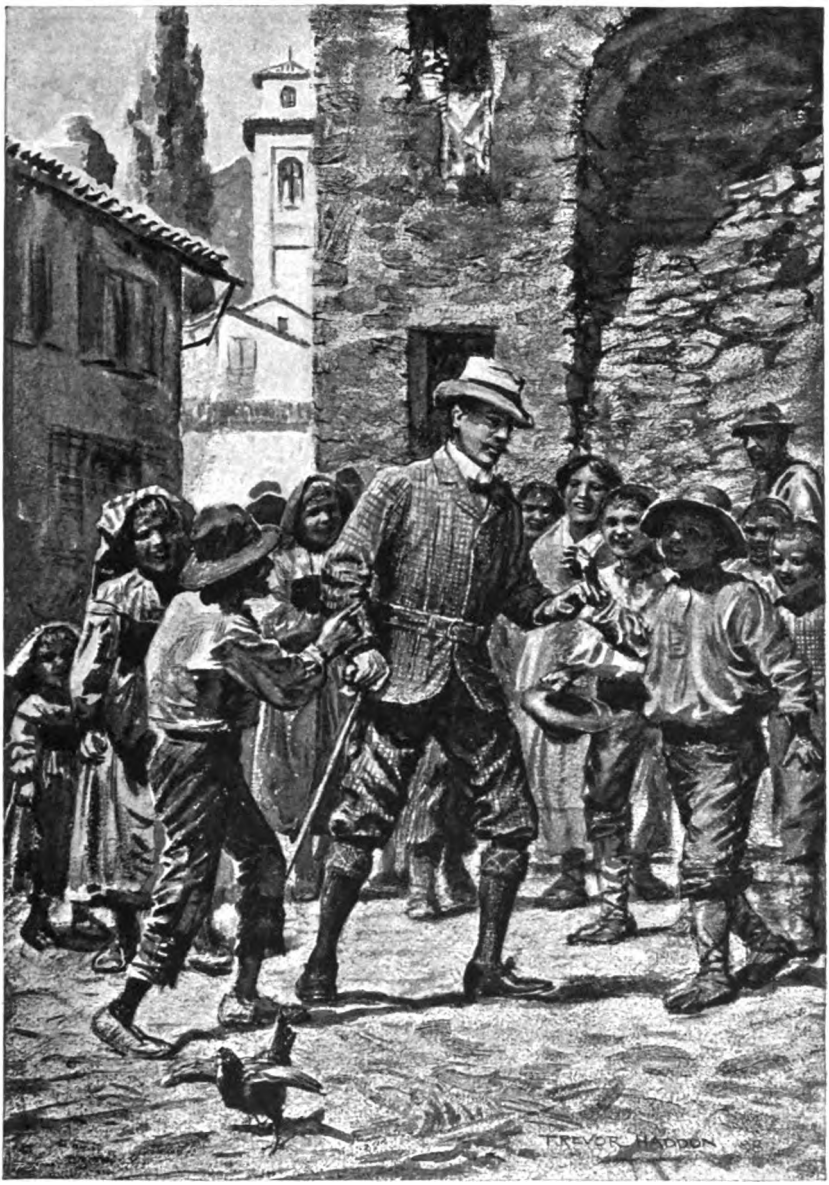
I felt sorry for point.

FIRE FISHING ON THE ITALIAN RIVIERA

BY THE HON. A. HERBERT

Of all the sports of Europe, Fire Fishing, *pesca al fuoco* as it is locally called, is surely one of the most picturesque. It is from one point of view something more than a sport, as it affords a means of livelihood, during a part of the year, for a portion of the population of every village along the Riviera. A seemingly difficult conjuncture of favourable circumstances has to take place before one can sally forth with any chance of success. In the first place, a *scuro di luna*, or a dark night before the moon has risen, is necessary; secondly, the sea must be absolutely still, and there must be no breeze. These essentials having been secured, one embarks. The boat is rowed gently along the rock-bound coast. A many-pronged spear is taken in the winter for the octopus and *lupo di mare*, and in the summer a landing net for the benefit of the smaller fish. Projecting about a foot over the bow of the boat is an iron framework, which contains the resinous pine-wood that serves as a torch. Upon one side of this the harpooner takes his stand, holding a formidable eleven-pronged weapon twelve feet long, and shielded by a broad-brimmed hat, to keep the sparks from his eyes.

It is impossible to imagine the effect of the torchlight as the boat moves gently under the caves and grottoes of the cliffs. The light is thrown back from the roof, glistening on stalactites, glancing on the fantastic peaks of rocks, and glowing on the crimson lichens that cover the side. The effect is rather uncanny, for every cave is filled with the weirdest sounds, even on the most quiet night, and little gusts of wind come sighing through



UNDER THE ESCORT OF ALL THE CHILDREN OF THE VILLAGE

some pitch-black passage which the torchlight entirely fails to penetrate, a fit haunt for the conger and the octopus.

Under these natural arches of rock, the sea becomes perfectly transparent; where there is a ripple the harpooner throws a drop of olive oil, and the water once more subsides into a green stillness. One can see the red star-fish lying in the lilac and purple seaweeds, and gorgeous anemones with their feelers spread out like the petals of a submarine flower. All colours are brilliant on this beautiful coast.

It is very hard to give any adequate idea of so unique a sport, but it is an easy thing for anyone travelling leisurely down the Riviera to gain an experience of it for himself, though it may not be always quite plain sailing for the uninitiated to procure a boatman and harpooner. If the would-be fisherman is of an enterprising character, he probably starts off walking or rowing, as a friend of mine did last year, to one of the less frequented villages where the sport is naturally better. His first step upon arriving at the village was to inquire for a fire fisherman, who, he was told, resided at a tumble-down little osteria. He proceeded thither under the escort of all the children of the village, who insisted upon almost leading him (for their opinion of a forestiere's understanding is not very high), and was then ushered into a low room whence a dozen hens were driven out, and, under the rather embarrassing gaze of every person who chanced to have nothing to do at the moment, negotiations were opened. The host, who owned the magnificent name of Virgilio, was also the harpooner, as he informed his guest with a beatific smile and a flourish of his hat; and the would-be student of *pesca al fuoco* began in direct Britannic style, without any beating about the bush. How much did Virgilio want to take him out for a night's fishing? Virgil replied that he would be more deeply honoured than language could express to receive any trifle that the Signorino might choose to give him. But this Italian version of 'leave it to you, sir,' was not quite satisfactory, and my friend suggested the desirability of settling a fixed price. It was, however, repugnant to Virgil's feelings to discuss so delicate a question with the Signorino, and so he retired into the background with a deep bow in favour of his brother, who was given plenipotentiary powers on his behalf. The discussion recommenced, and the Englishman was much perplexed by the courtly evasions he had to endure, till at last, in desperation, he named a sum, and found that Virgil and his brothers, despite their deprecatory speeches, had very distinct ideas as to their value. A price

satisfactory to both parties was presently fixed, and the hour of departure was settled for eight o'clock; it was not till then that inquiries discovered that he had yet to pay for the wood for the torchlight, and for the boy who brought it, for somebody's boat which had been borrowed, and yet somebody else's harpoon.

Great care is necessary in the selection of a seat in the boat, as, if you are too near the torch you are liable to be burnt by the sparks, and if you are too far away, you are likely to be severely and repeatedly struck upon the head by the butt end of the harpoon when a thrust is made at a fish. Provisions are always taken on these occasions. If the forestiere pays for them, they assume the shape of *pane dolce* and a bottle of Asti, otherwise some bread, and wine that tastes like vinegar.

The start is made from the harbour in perfect darkness, though this fact troubles the natives very little, for the only light usually visible in an Italian village after nine o'clock is that of an osteria. This gradually dwindles away in the distance, and the boat glides silently on, leaving a livid green patch wherever the oars dip. The torch is only lighted when the rocks are reached and the fishing begins in earnest. It makes a very quaint picture, as the smoky fire of the torch streams out, fitfully irradiating the eager face and the poised harpoon of the fisherman, illuminating part of the rock which rises perhaps three hundred feet straight out of the water, while here and there it reveals a black pine trunk, with a crown of dark green, and makes the shadows of the boatmen seem almost to be climbing the precipice as it flares and flickers. The oarsman must be very 'capace,' as the boat has to thread in and out, to pass over sunken rocks, and explore the tar-black caverns made by the overhanging cliff.

The great drawback of fire fishing, from the fisherman's point of view, is the expense of having his harpoon repaired, which is necessary almost every other night, as the teeth are constantly turned and blunted by the rocks. The fish is usually struck when lying in some crevice of a rock, or upon the bottom; unless this is the case they often escape, as there is no resistance to the harpoon.

Fire fishing is not entirely without drawbacks. When 'a diavolino,' or small devil fish, for instance, is brought hurriedly into the boat, one is roused with unpleasant haste from contemplating the beauties of the scene to find one's self very literally between the devil and the deep sea. The most revolting fish, and the one which is, perhaps, caught most often, is the octopus. He looks up at one with a supercilious expression in his two

THE SMOKY FIRE OF THE TORCH STREAMS OUT, FITFULLY IRRADIATING THE EAGER FACE OF THE FISHERMAN

projecting eyes, which changes to surprise and indignation when he finds himself deposited in the boat, occasionally—for the Italians are fond of practical jokes—in the lap of the unfortunate stranger, who is in consequence not seldom obliged to nurse the monstrosity for some considerable time, as the octopus is a determined creature with a strong will of his own, and it is his habit to hold on with all the strength of his eight legs to any object that may have the ill fortune, I hardly know whether to say, to please or displease him. The dread that always haunted me out fishing almost spoilt my enjoyment. The oarsmen stand and push when rowing, and every now and then they stop to hand some wood to the harpooner to keep the torch alive. On one occasion an octopus instead of the wood was handed out of the darkness, and I narrowly escaped his tender embrace; after that I was never quite happy when I had my back to the oarsmen. The octopus has an original habit of leaving his native element, and taking excursions up the rocks every now and then, when any unaccustomed noise rouses his curiosity. He is not infrequently captured while on these excursions, and if he is not an octopus of too portly a person, is immediately eaten by his captor. The Italians are very fond of eating fish literally alive. It is a frequent, and far from an appetising sight, to see a fish disappear slowly struggling energetically like a worm that is taken by a bird.

It is quite extraordinary what proficiency can be attained with the harpoon; strength is a *sine quâ non*, as is constant practice. Among the remarkable fish that form a considerable part of an average night's take, are long snake-like creatures of a vivid green, having a beak like miniature swordfish, generally about two inches long. These creatures dash round the boat in circles, leaving a shining wake behind them in the phosphorescent water; sometimes they jump right out at the torch, and then, sending up a thousand tongues of light from the polished surface of the sea, they fall back and disappear in a silvery streak into the darkness. A peculiarity of this fish is that its bones are of a bright green. They are considered good eating by the Genoese. I was never able to discover their real name, but locally they are called 'aguing.'

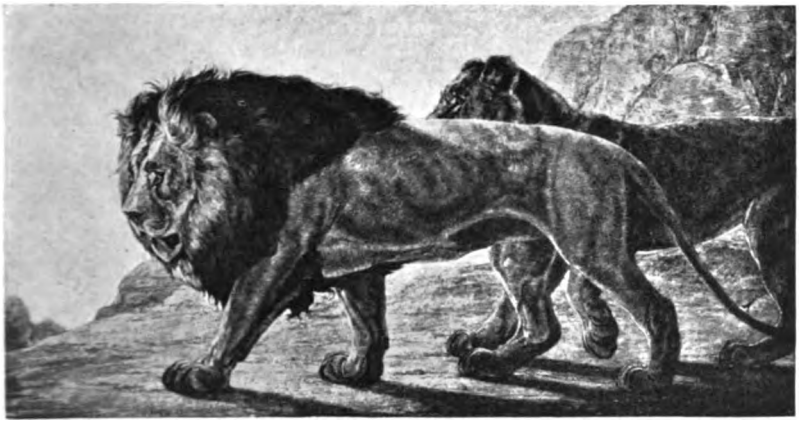
Upon rare and notable occasions a dolphin is struck, but the harpooner must be a man of great skill and experience to keep a hold of his fish. There is a superstition that when a dolphin is at the point of death the creature changes colour violently, and whistles a plaintive melody; but how far this may be the case I am unable to say, as, owing to its retiring nature, I never had an

opportunity of seeing it perform. The most brilliant fish that is ever taken is the *mincia del ré*, whose scales glitter when it is first brought from the water as if they were burnished silver and gold; the effect, however, soon fades.

The fish, with a few exceptions, are not actually attracted to the light, as is commonly supposed; they are only dazzled by the glare, and are for a few moments stupefied by the unfamiliarity of everything.

I have constantly heard the Italians reproached with unbounded cruelty. I cannot say what the case may be with the Southerners, but I am quite convinced that in the North, in nine times out of ten, cruelty is only thoughtlessness. Almost invariably they accede at once to any request that is made in the interests of humanity, and when the cruelty or uselessness of a thing is demonstrated, they reform entirely.

The best Fire Fishing is supposed to be obtained along the Sicilian coast, but in the right season sport of a very tolerable character can be procured anywhere south of Genoa. Half the charm of this fishing really lies in the pleasure derived from association with the natives, who are utterly unlike any other people I have ever met. Italian politeness is proverbial, but in the Genoese it is not, as in the case of the Parisian, merely a veneer which can be dropped and resumed at convenience, but an innate characteristic. It is not only to the stranger whom he is about to row, and whom it is his interest to please, that the fisherman bows and uncovers, but equally to any peasant with whom he is acquainted. It is quite true, as the John Bull type of person superciliously remarks, that the Italians are very emotional, but I cannot see that this is a cause for reproach when most of their impulses and emotions are generous and warm-hearted.



PET ANIMALS

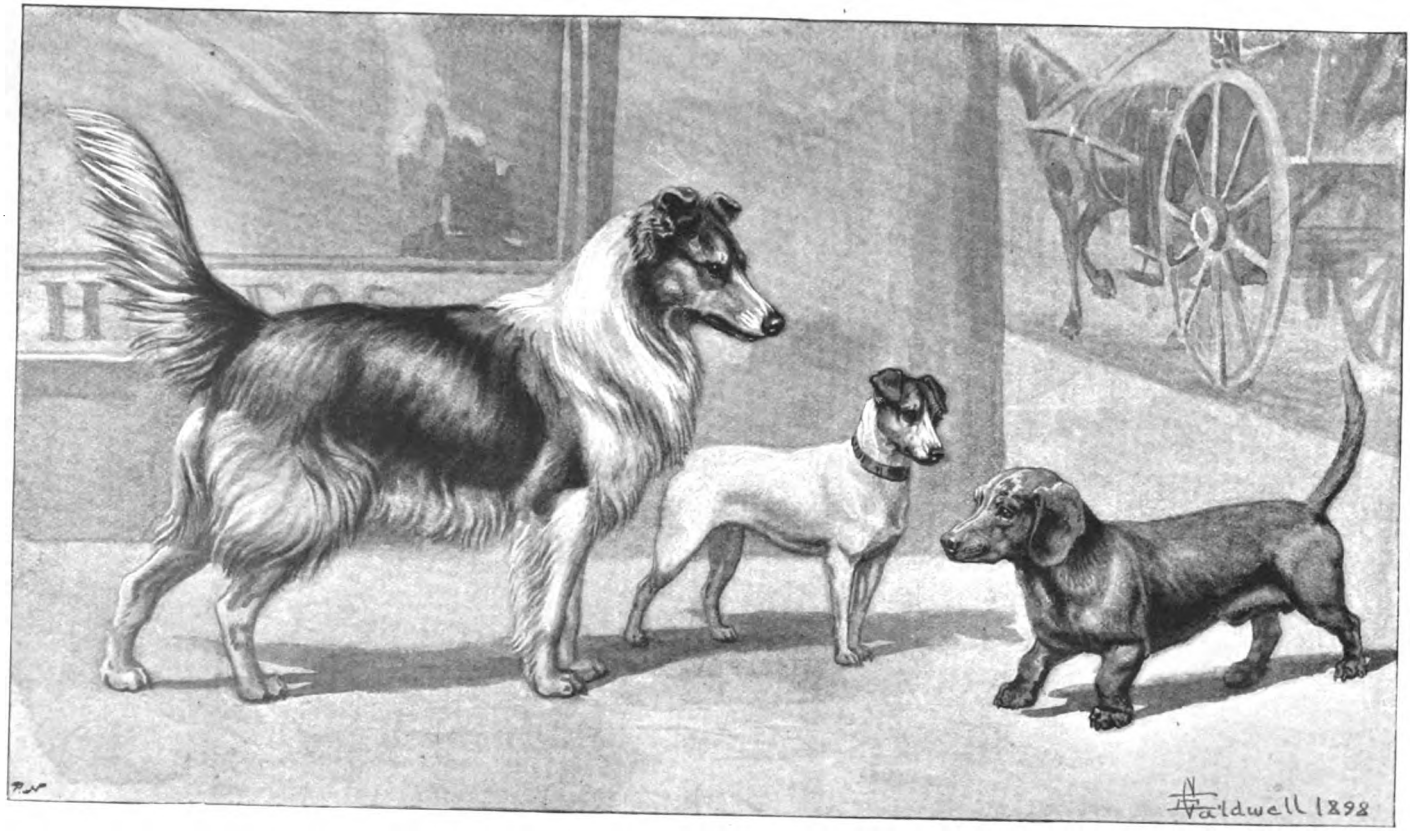
BY H. R. FRANCIS

BEFORE discussing contemporary pets, it may be briefly observed that an equivalent to this now familiar expression is hardly, I think, to be found in either the Greek or the Latin classics. The nearest approach to one is perhaps made by Catullus, when he speaks of Lesbia's sparrow as '*deliciæ* meæ puellæ,' but the term used is so vaguely general that it cannot fairly be said to correspond with that which we apply in England to so many animals, and animals only, in which from our childhood upwards we take what may fairly be called an affectionate interest. The domestic cat has no place in classical narrative, whether prose or verse. Homer's account of Ulysses' dog Argus, who in the infirmity of extreme old age still recognises his master on his return from Troy, is touching in the extreme. But Argus was simply a powerful hound, who, as the poet tells us, would do battle with the fiercest wild animals, either on the plain or in their woodland haunts. He was no *pet*, or he would have accompanied his master to Troy, instead of being left for twenty years in rocky Ithaca.

When Pope's Belinda is threatened by dire omens, Ariel himself undertakes to guard her favourite spaniel as the most precious of many charges. Shock was, in fact, a pet of the first order. Gray's 'pensive Selina,' again, was evidently a pet, for

even in recording her disastrous fate he finds room for the reflection that 'a favourite has no friend.' Cowper's hares belong to an inferior order of pet, but his tale of 'a poet's cat, sedate and grave as ever poet wished to have' is evidently told of a particular cat in whose humours he was interested. As for his spaniel Beau, prettiest of his race, we can see not only that he was his tender-hearted master's pet, but also that he was well worthy of such an honour. The story of the 'cropped water-lily' tells us of a dog who had attained that higher education which is only possible for a 'bow-wow' who has been privileged to enjoy the intimacy not merely of a human being, but of one specially gentle and sympathetic. Cowper gives us elsewhere a less endearing picture of a very common pet, the parrot Poll presented to the fair Belinda by her naval admirer; a pet, no doubt, but of more showy and less endearing gifts. The idea of a pet lamb finds much favour, especially with the young. Of all the charming tales which Miss Edgeworth penned for her youthful readers in 'The Parent's Assistant,' I doubt whether any gives more pleasure or evokes more sympathy than 'Simple Susan,' whose anxiety for her favourite affects youthful readers to-day, even as it did the tender-hearted Welsh harper in the tale, who felt what musical suggestion lay in the youthful heroine's distress. Wordsworth's 'Little Barbara Lewthwaite' interests us, I think, less from the 'beauty rare' which he ascribes to her, than from her tenderness to the 'snow-white mountain lamb' at whose side the poet saw her. The present writer will not readily forget that his first view of the loved and honoured Queen, round whose sixty years' reign so many precious memories are now gathered, was opposite Kensington Palace, where she was playing with a pet lamb; a winsome child of five years old, in a white frock and pink sash.

We are now living in an age of pets. It is specially curious to see how many persons, ladies especially, in spite of the increasing claims of society and of active philanthropy, find pleasure in keeping a dog. Carlyle's splenetic phrase of 'doggeries' might be fairly applied to many streets of suburban London. A pavement of more than common width is sure to be an exercise ground for perambulators and dogs in leading-strings. The pedestrian without encumbrances yet finds himself sorely hampered in his movements between baby's car and mamma's cur. No doubt well-bred and well-looking dogs may be seen taking their airing, but the great majority are neither one nor the other. But then, in the present classification of



POPULAR PETS

dogs, as it may be traced at competitive shows, there are so many recognised varieties that we are afraid to find fault with some ugly and useless beast lest we should be told that it belongs to a very superior class highly esteemed by connoisseurs. Some, like the dachshund, present a recognised type, though it remains a puzzling question why such creatures should be popular as pets. The dachshund, of course, owes his name to his supposed capacity for what is called 'drawing a badger.' In point of fact, it is doubtful whether any of the so-called badger-dogs is capable of performing that difficult feat. Put the poor badger in a barrel where his flank may be turned by a wary assailant, he may be *drawn* no doubt, though a clever bull-terrier is more likely to do the trick than the long-bodied, long-nosed waddlers who disfigure the Brompton Road. But give Dachs fair play, let him guard the narrow entrance to his own burrow, and I decline to believe that any of these turnspit-like creatures will be able, in Irish phrase, to 'make him lave that.' Badgers are now become so scarce in England that the breed of 'Pepper' and 'Mustard' would not find it too easy to meet with their enemy the *brock* south of the border. Thus, at best, the ugly, clumsy tykes now so popular in and about London are of no practical use, and must be petted for the beauty they have not, and for the intelligence in which a well-bred rough terrier or the handsome, half-reasoning Scotch collie would be found greatly their superior. Again, we may be permitted to doubt whether a huge dog of the St. Bernard breed, 'more or less pure,' has any business in the streets of London. He might be a handsome object in front of some stately old castle, though even there that noble relic of old times, the grand English mastiff, would be a more dignified, perhaps a more useful guardian. A friend of the writer had an experience of these giant gate-wards which may be worth recording. He had been making the grand tour of the grounds with one of the head-gardeners, when he remembered having laid down his umbrella near the gates. He was hurrying back to fetch it when he was arrested by the two guardian mastiffs. They neither bayed nor growled nor scared him by a sudden rush, but simply stepped up on each side of him and gave him to understand that he was under arrest till released by authority. But of course animals like these are too noble for the familiar vocation of pets.

It is very interesting to observe how close domestic intercourse with mankind affects the manners of pet animals, especially by teaching them to repress feelings of annoyance and aversion.

A benevolent neighbour of mine in London used to feel much pity for the cats deserted at the end of the season, and left to the tender mercies of a caretaker or a servant on board wages. She had herself a cat and a dog who were finished specimens of drawing-room culture. Being one day moved with pity for a half-starved puss in our square, she took it home for food and kind usage. Had she been contented to leave it in the kitchen all might have gone well. But in the fulness of her charity she must needs take it up to the softer luxury of the drawing-room. Here the lean stranger was clearly out of place, and expressed her feelings of annoyance in the sort of language common to cats and cads, and in either class known as *swearing*. She set up her back, fluffed out her ropy tail, and uttered the coarsest of cat language, about on a level for dissonant violence with that of an Australian bullock-driver execrating a refractory team. Pet cat and dog looked at each other, and seeing the door ajar, walked out and seated themselves on the mat outside. It was not their business to rebuke the stranger's vulgar slang, but they would not appear to countenance it. A dear lady friend had a cat, Toddles by name, who seemed to have attained the very highest degree of feline refinement. My daughter came up to Mrs. Gordon's room one day when she was out, though expected to return soon. Toddles alighted from the sofa, whence she was contemplating the humours of Prince's Gate, and literally came forward to greet her. She did not mew, but with a murmured sound like indistinct human speech led the visitor to a seat. My wife, who followed, received a similar welcome.

Change of circumstances may sometimes promote to the rank of pet a critter who had previously some special vocation of his own. The best sporting-dog I ever possessed had for his sire a grand retriever of the wire-haired Russian breed. During some years of residence in capital shooting quarters at Treganwg, halfway between Conway and the Orme's Head, before the growth of Llandudno had disenchanted that delightful wild promontory, Boon was a constant companion of my walks. There were always rabbits to be had, and in the shooting season I rarely troubled him with the company of another dog. His performances, especially in winter, when he was in his glory amongst ice and snow, were really worth recording, and I have sometimes blamed myself for never requesting the *Field* to relate some of his wonderful triumphs in retrieving. But I had to take a reluctant leave of my pleasant Welsh quarters, and migrated townwards to work at law at the Temple while my

family occupied a villa looking on Wimbledon Common. Boon, of course, accompanied our migration as one of the family. At Wimbledon he was the observed of many observers. His occupation as retriever would have been quite gone but for the vagrant habits which led the poultry of our neighbours to lay their eggs at random in Lord Spencer's park. Boon always attended my daughters in their walks, but would often gallop off on a random quest, returning at high speed with a fresh egg unbroken in his mouth. A pat on the head with a hearty 'Good dog!' served him as receipt in full; but if these were neglected or delayed, Boon would betray the only symptom of temper he was ever known to exhibit. He would lay the egg down and crush it with a pat of his forefoot. Often, however, he had to give up his egg-hunting for a more dignified vocation. My younger daughter had a cat of the highest pretensions, and Boon used to promenade past the long line of villas which bordered the common carrying on his back no less a personage than puss in her silver collar. He really seemed proud of his burden, and walked with all the dignity of a state elephant. No evil-minded bow-wow ever interfered with the pair; partly, no doubt, because Boon would have been a dangerous customer to tackle, but chiefly, I think, on account of his invincible good-humour. From puppyhood to a venerable age I never heard him growl, and no respectable dog could ever have found a pretext for quarrelling with him. We used to say that he laughed, and in truth the kindly expression of his face almost justified the word. He attracted much attention in his promenades, and many handsome bids were made for him if it had been possible to sell such a family friend. I heartily wish he had been known to the genial zoologist whose articles delight us in the *Spectator*. Yet, after all, he was too big for a pet. That name, I think, should be reserved for some animal of a manageable size, not too big for a drawing-room, and gifted with the best of tempers.

The Australian animals generally are good-natured and easily tamed. There are, of course, notable exceptions, such as the 'Tasmanian wolf' and 'devil' and the whole tribe of Dasyurus, or 'native cat,' all of whom either decline to be tamed or have not been thought worth taming. Kangaroos would make very tolerable pets if we could only deal with them as the Japanese deal with their forest trees, and put an effective check on their growth. But adult kangaroos, if they do not become absolutely malevolent, become rough and boisterous to a degree which is by no means endearing. I remember one who was allowed to hang about a station,

and was in fact specially credited with tameness, whose caresses could hardly be distinguished from an assault. A pat from him between the shoulders reduced a coat—I am happy to say not mine—to the divided skirt which has not yet found a place in the masculine toilet. And I saw a pair of full-grown grey foresters, miscalled tame, whose delight was to run with the kangaroo dogs of the station, with whom they lived on terms of rude familiarity, and to assist in hunting down their own wild relatives. Some of the wallaby, however, of the smaller varieties make pretty pets enough, being graceful and affectionate, though I should not credit them with high intelligence. My daughter had one which used to play a charming little game if she would make a lap for it. It used to take a header as if into the maternal pouch, curling round and reappearing with nose and toes together just like a well-behaved 'joey.' The length and strength of the hind legs belonging to this family are rather a set-off against their other petable qualities. Some of the opossums are very handsome, especially in their rich winter fur. I saw one once which was jet-black. In a sense they are readily tamed, being very willing to be fed and cuddled and cosseted. They have so little fear of man that I remember a young one climbing up my leg in a wood near Kempsey and actually nestling in my bosom. But they are very perverse in their hours; they will sleep all day if you make them a warm lodging, but become restless and almost reckless about the hour when, according to Mr. Simpkinson, 'all good little boys and girls should be in bed.' About 9 o'clock P.M. my daughter's pet would be flying about the drawing-room in a most disquieting fashion. His special delight was to scuttle up the hangings and swing himself by his prehensile tale to the end of the curtain-pole, where we were often content to leave him lest he should make wild sallies among the furniture. I have never seen the little native bear, with his black little snout, beady eyes, and fluffy white wool like a child's toy lamb, made much of as a pet. But he is absurdly tame, caring only to lie soft and warm. There is a touching and truthful picture in Henry Kingsley's admirable Australian novel, 'Geoffrey Hamlyn,' of the searchers finding too late the little boy lost in the bush. He lies in the cold calm of his long sleep, but the wee native bear whom he has found and taken to his arms is still nestling in his bosom. I think if I were to make a pet of an Australian quadruped I should choose a wombat. He is difficult to describe: a queer little plantigrade, something between a pig, a bear, and a badger, dwelling underground in a community rather than a family. He is very wary and difficult

of access. I have lain a whole summer night, finger on trigger, watching for the chance of a snapshot, for they are nocturnal feeders, but I never succeeded in getting one, though now and then a grey shadow seemed to flit by in some unexpected quarter. The full-grown wombat is formidably strong. I was greatly amused with the adventures of two young ladies in a house well known to me. They had left their bedroom window a few inches

AUSTRALIAN OPOSSUM

open on a warm night, and a pet wombat, to whom they had not been introduced—Agamemnon, I think, was his name—wedged his head under the sash and actually heaved it open. The dismay of the damsels when they saw this strange intruder entering their sanctum was comical but distressing. They climbed up by the aid of a chair to the top of a chest of drawers, on which, unluckily, they had deposited sundry packages. They used these one by

one as missiles to be hurled at the mysterious foe. What further measures they might have adopted I know not, but luckily the door was ajar, and their disturber suddenly whipped out to range the house, where he was a privileged person. Another of the same family visited the same room when occupied by my wife and myself. This time, luckily, it was Clytemnestra, who was smaller and less robust. Her Majesty contented herself with trying experiments on my waistcoat, which I had carelessly left on the floor. It was easy to thrust her head through one arm-hole, but the second rather puzzled her. We found her in the morning so bundled up in it that not only could she not disengage herself, but it took all we knew to get her clear of the garment, which was not improved by the process. But these two, with a third—Cassandra, I think—were really very nice creatures. Life aboveground had somewhat modified their habits, and they would trot after you by daylight most sociably, grunting occasionally in a suppressed tone, like the father of guinea-pigs. Their curiosity was very amusing; they would poke into every nook and corner, perhaps in a vague hope that it might prove the entrance to a burrow. They must, however, be caught young if they are to be available as pets, else their great strength would quite disqualify them for society. A Tasmanian is recorded to have surprised one just entering its burrow door, and to have seized it cannily by the hind legs. But though he held on to the utmost of his strength, the wombat was stronger than he, and he had at length to let go, on pain of being dragged head-foremost into some underground recess. On the whole, however, I would not go to Australia for a pet. Head, in his journey over the Pampas —the narrative of which, by-the-bye, at one time achieved a great and merited popularity—introduced us to the vizcacha, or, as he spells it, biscacho, whose burrows are dotted over that vast plain, and call upon the horseman to keep a bright look-out lest he should suffer from 'what Mrs. Ramsbottom calls a *fox-paw*.' By the rough-riding captain's description they must be funny little fellows enough; but as their habit is to keep house with an owl and a rattlesnake, they might not be suited for residence in a quiet family. Very pleasant things are told of the South African mere-cat, a playful little beastie with large soft eyes and a bushy, squirrel-like tail. He sits up and holds up his fore-paws in most endearing fashion as he suns himself by the fire or intimates his desire to be cuddled; but, alas! he is too delicate for our English climate. Perhaps the most charming pets I ever knew were two flying-squirrels, hailing, I think, from Canada. The membranes

outspread from the fore to the hind foot, which enabled them to skim in a long downward flight, were not in the least bat-like, but of the richest tawny fur, darker at the border. Nothing could be tamer or more playful; they would make a long slanting descent from the top of the curtains to their mistress's shoulder, where they would perch as lightly as a bird and play a pretty game at hiding a nut or an acorn in her abundant *chevelure*. I fancy there are sundry American varieties of the squirrel tribe whom it might be pleasant to tame. In truth, any small quadruped that is at once playful and affectionate may be a desirable pet, provided that

SOUTH AFRICAN MERE-CAT

it can bear our climate and be happy in confinement. The dormouse is a pretty little creature enough, but as far as my observation goes, usually so drowsy that it might just as well hibernate all the year through. But perhaps I am somewhat prejudiced against this poor little rodent by an unpleasant transformation I once witnessed. A young lady took hold, perhaps somewhat impatiently, of her pet's tail. The whole furry garniture came off in her hand, and the poor little creature was left with only the skeleton of its brush, most delicate in the vertebræ, but by no means ornamental. Rabbits are common pets with children, but seem to me never to be on affectionate terms with those who care

for them and feed them. They eat very greedily, and have certainly mastered the multiplication table so as to become, what I have seen them in Australia, a very scourge to farmer and grazier. In this country they are sometimes systematically reared in a sandy warren for the supply of a great town, but generally speaking they are encouraged on wild commons or in scrubby woodland for the sportsman's amusement. It requires a quick eye and an instinctive rapidity of aim to catch bunny when he bolts from a sheltered bush or skips across a tiny ride. The time has been when I scarcely knew what it was to miss one, though seen but for a moment; but I do not think this is a common gift. If it is, why are shooters, who should be sportsmen, so often seen peering into low cover to surprise a rabbit who is merely hopping or skipping about, without an attempt to go the pace? But all this is simply a digression. We are not going to make a pet of the rabbit or to recommend him as such to our young friends. We would rather cultivate the affections of a mouse. The common house-mouse may, of course, be tamed; but he is a domestic plague, and his smell makes him a positive abomination. Nor is anything gained by adopting Count Fosco's *penchant* for the white variety. An albino is generally stupid, and white mice with pink eyes are no exception to the rule. But few lovelier little creatures can be found than the tiny red harvest-mouse, whose Liliputian dwelling, not the size of a fives-ball, is a marvel of domestic comfort on the smallest scale. To see the nimble mite race up the stem of a thistle or some slighter weed to the tiny spherical dwelling which shelters himself, his wee wifie, and a numerous brood of pigmy young 'scarce so gross as beetles,' is a pretty, as well as a curious sight. And as far as I remember my boyish acquaintance with these tiny creatures, they were easily tamed and by no means timid. Their cosy little homestead may be fairly compared to the warm, pendent nest of that tiniest of all English birds—smaller even than the golden-crested wren—the long-tailed titmouse, a pair of which I have seen with nineteen young ones snugly packed away in an oval abode, scarce bigger than my fist, daintily lined with moss and wool. Again, there is a large field-mouse, with eyes as soft and black as those of Hinda's gazelle, who is readily tamed and soon learns to eat from childish hands. I must not forget here one of Shakespeare's rere-mice, the long-eared bat, whose manners are particularly caressing. In my boyhood a dear sister had one of these who was clearly most affectionate. Umbriel, as he was named, after Pope's gnome, knew his

mistress's voice well, and at her call would shuffle across the table to eat from her hand in a manner which, if not graceful, was certainly loving. His large ears, one of which would cover his whole body, were doubtless fashioned to guide him in his nightly pursuit of insects by focussing the waves of air thrown back from neighbouring surfaces, but when he was being petted had a most whimsical appearance. There is, however, no end to the number of small creatures which may be made amusing, if not also affectionate. A glass case for feeding curious caterpillars and watching their transformations is very interesting to intelligent children. We used to make much even of spiders. Even now I remember well a yellow and a blue one, each carrying a bag of eggs at its tail, who fell on deadly strife and fought till yellow finally mastered blue, after depriving her of sundry legs, wound her up, and hung her in the larder for quiet consumption. This result quite satisfied a boy's notion of the fitness of things, and I had dismissed the victorious spider from my thoughts when I heard that she was to be seen carrying both bags of eggs, as if conscious of a coming duty towards orphans of her own making. The incident was certainly curious, and it has sometimes struck me since that the surviving spider assumed a duty which in all natural equity was hers. These insects, however, though so carefully watched, could not fairly claim the name of pets, nor, indeed, could sundry reptiles who afforded me great amusement when lodged with some lively water insects in a very large red pan, or rather tub, which was my best substitute for that modern delight of young naturalists, the aquarium. That large handsome water-lizard, *Triton cristatus*, showed distinguished voracity. Two very fine specimens, whom I named Appetite and In-for-it, would swallow the head and tail of a large lobworm till their noses nearly met. Then the great water beetle of the fens, *Dytiscus marginalis*, would rush between them to claim his share, while the efts did nothing but hold on. But there was yet a stronger champion to enter the lists, for the larva of the great dragon-fly, a very large green water insect, was always on the look-out when anything was to be eaten ; and as he could rush forward on the self-propelling principle of the Congreve rocket by a stream of water driven backward through his body, he had mostly the best of the wormy war, though his rivals were very slow to disgorge, and the luckless worm had his juices pretty well drained before he became the final spoil of the victor.

It appears that I have now descended by a curious sort of anti-climax from a comment on pets in the highest sense,

animals at once intelligent and affectionate, to remarks on creatures of a lower order, which may be amusing and even interesting to a student of life in its countless phases, but can hardly engage, and will certainly not return, our affections. Yet perhaps in this seeming descent we may really have been rising to a higher sense of our true relations to the world of sentient life around us. No doubt Wordsworth, in his 'Hart-leap Well,' reads us a noble lesson when he bids us—

> Never to blend our pleasure or our pride
> With sorrow to the meanest thing that feels.

AN ORPHAN

But the stag is a noble beast of chase, and his sufferings and tears might well evoke sympathy, not merely from a plaintive humorist like Shakespeare's Jaques, but from sportsmen or naturalist students of the higher orders of animal life in England. Yet such sympathy, though freely given to 'Doe and roe and red-deer good,' might be, and in fact very often is, withheld from large classes of sentient and perhaps highly gifted creatures whom we are pleased to lump together as *vermin*—of course, not in Mr. Keating's, but in the gamekeeper's sense. And thus, perhaps, it may be good for us, especially in early youth, to give careful

attention to the habits and even the tastes of creatures which can make no claims to dignity and no appeal to sentiment. Such a habit must tend to widen and deepen our solemn view of God's marvels in creation. When we have learnt to see how much there is to engage our reverent thought and attention, even in those creatures which are commonly overlooked or despised, we shall be the better able to look with due reverence on the vastness of the Divine work. A passage from Sir Henry Taylor's deeply suggestive poem arises to my mind, which I trust that even the lapse of nearly half a century will not lead me to misquote.

Thus, or nearly thus, speaks the thoughtful Artevelde:

> Treading the paths of common life with eyes
> Of curious inquisition, men will stare
> At each discovery of Nature's work
> As if 'twere new to find that God contrives;
> The contrary were marvellous to me,
> And till I find it I shall wonder not,
> Or all is wonderful or nothing is.

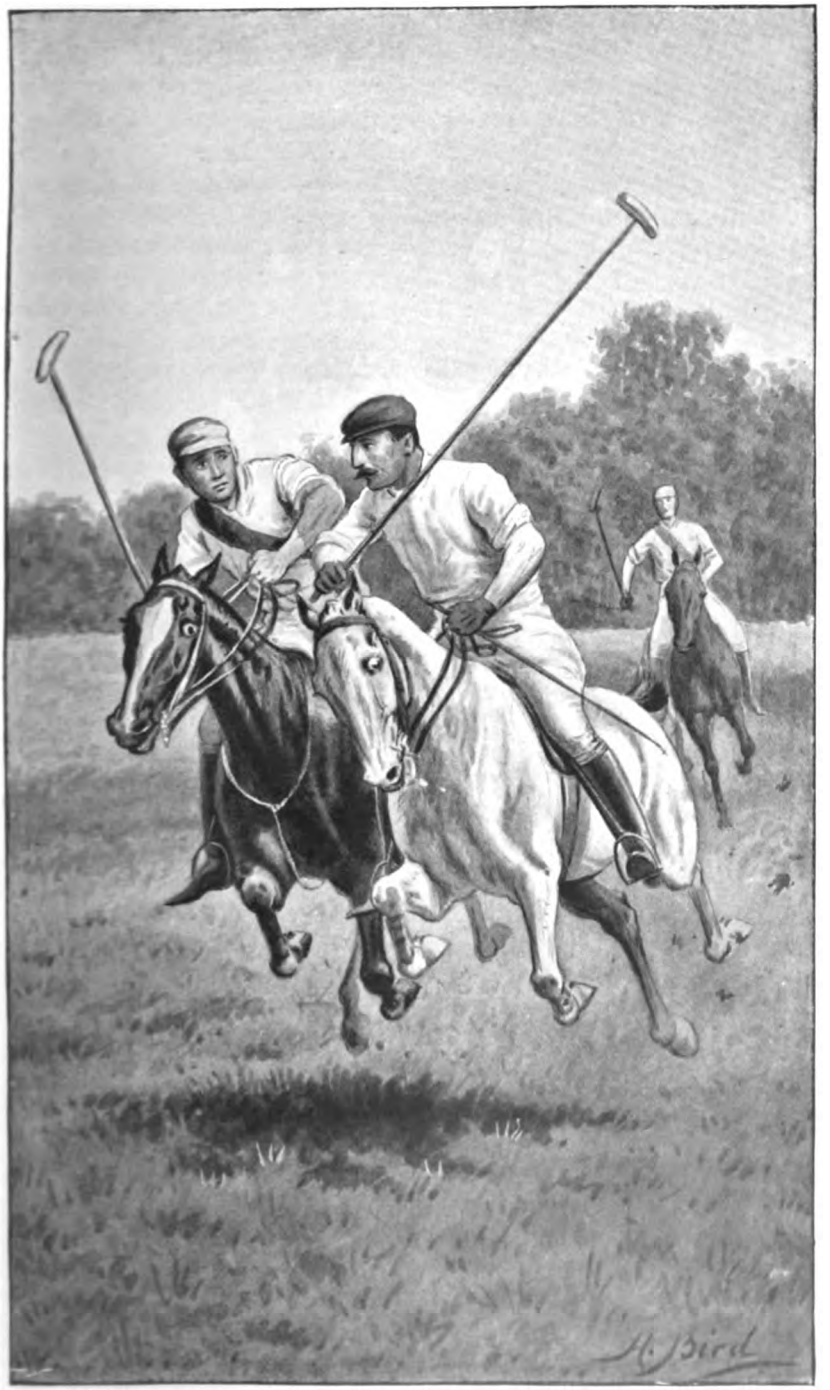
When I recall with what may seem a whimsical minuteness the lessons taught me, long, long ago, by some of the humblest creatures, I feel sure that children, who in default of pets of a higher order interest themselves in the ways of insects and reptiles, small tenants of the glass case and the aquarium, will be less tempted to thoughtless cruelty or to the indifference which issues in ignorance only less culpable. But, indeed, to speak broadly, I would fain see our boys and girls generally fond of animals, not in Tom Tulliver's sense, fond of throwing stones at them, but drawn by a kindly sympathy to close observation of their works and ways; so various in their adaptation to countless modes of life, yet so harmoniously testifying to the infinite wisdom and goodness traceable throughout the mighty scheme of Creation.

THE RECENT DEVELOPMENT OF POLO

BY T. F. DALE

FROM the Polo Pavilion at Hurlingham on one of the great polo days of the year, to watch eight of our best players sweep down the ground in pursuit of the ball is a sight to stir the blood of any lover of sport. To the polo player who has seen the wild hillmen at the game, who has watched the supple Sikhs of Patiala and Jodhpur hitting the ball from positions which seem impossible, who has himself taken part in the old reckless helter-skelter game of twenty years ago, such a sight is enthralling. The thud of the ponies' hoofs, the rapt earnestness of the players, the combined skill, pace, and excitement of the game cause men—and women too—on that crowded pavilion to lean over and catch their breath as the eight men in close-locked pairs rush by at the best speed of their blood ponies, any two of which are worth a small fortune.

Deliberately I say this of the value of the ponies, for the worth of a really good polo pony to a player cannot be put into words, can scarcely be computed in figures. While, therefore, there are so many ways of spending money that leave a sting behind them, we have three at our disposal which entail no after regrets. The



THE OLD RECKLESS HELTER-SKELTER GAME OF TWENTY YEARS AGO

possessions that will give us almost limitless enjoyment are: the racehorse that can and will win races, the hunter that can and will carry us at the top of the hunt, and the polo pony that can and will play polo. Nor should I hesitate to say that of these I would give the palm to the polo pony.

The teams we see before us from the pavilion are those of the Freebooters and of Rugby, two of the finest ever seen on a polo ground in England. How simple the game is to watch when such men as these are playing! The places are kept as they sweep from end to end of the ground, the pace is good, the ball scarcely ever hangs, whatever the state of the turf, and the control of the ball is complete.

Among those whose names stand out in the annals of these clubs, Lord Southampton showed himself to be one of the finest and most masterful hitters the game has known in our time. He was too seldom seen, and has now laid by the stick and ball altogether; but he was always good to watch, and was one of the few who could go into a first-rate game with little or no previous practice. He had learnt the game, however, in the 10th Hussars, always a most admirable school for polo. It was another noble lord, once an officer in that distinguished regiment, who used to declare that either soldiering or polo was enough to engross any man's time and attention, but that both were more than one person could manage.

Another player who controls the ball well is Mr. Walter Buckmaster, undoubtedly the finest 'back' of our day. Without possessing the consummate judgment as to the placing of the ball shown by Captain Maclaren, or the force of Mr. Jack Dryburgh, he combines judgment and sufficient power with a beauty of style in which only two men, Mr. 'Johnnie' Peat and Captain Renton, have ever equalled him. As a 'No. 2' player there is no one to beat Captain Renton, when it is his day. To see him on his brown pony take the ball away for a run is one of the sights of polo.

The Messrs. Miller show what long practice, great pains, and a knowledge of the game can do. They understand combination thoroughly, and even if Mr. E. D. Miller never hit the ball at all —which I need hardly say he does do most effectively—it would be worth while having him in any team for his power of keeping the men together. When he is playing, say at 'No. 3,' you will hardly ever see the players opening out like a fan as they near the goal, with the almost certain effect, when the chance comes of scoring, that the ball is either missed or awkwardly tipped so

that it will go wide of the posts. A polo team, after a stirring gallop, when every man is doing his utmost and has his blood stirred with the pace, is apt to get out of hand, like a cavalry regiment after a charge, and for the same reason.

Another player who is always interesting to watch is Mr. A. Rawlinson. No game is ever dull in which he takes part. There is a dash and a thoroughness about his play which will force life even into the dullest contest. A match in which he is engaged is almost certain to be worth looking at. The very expression of

ON HIS BROWN PONY TAKING THE BALL AWAY FOR A RUN

his back when he is making a run and resisting the 'No. 3' of the opposite side, who is striving to ride him off, is itself a study in polo. Brilliant, though somewhat uncertain, with a fancy for raking ponies which try even his strength, and a theory of breaking them for polo that leads inevitably to pulling, Mr. Rawlinson would be as much missed from the polo ground as any modern player were he to retire.

When the history of polo comes to be written it will be acknowledged, I think, that the last four years have been an im-

portant period in the annals of the game. The retirement of the Messrs. Peat, at the very moment when their influence was at its height, gave room for their teaching to bear fruit. Shortly before this, Mr. Moray Brown, who had shown that polo was a topic worthy of an eloquent pen, wrote for the Badminton Library the first treatise on the game ever published in England, and the Messrs. Miller founded their establishment at Springhill, which has done much to raise the standard of play and of the ponies employed in it. From Springhill came the best of those galloping blood ponies which have changed our ideal of a polo pony from a miniature hunter to a miniature racehorse.

During this short period the Ranelagh Club has sprung up, and has found in polo and good management the secret of a great success. The large space available in the 124 acres of the Club grounds and the really splendid pavilion that has been erected are witnesses to the extraordinary development of the game during these four years.

More recently has come the action of the Hurlingham Polo Committee, in fixing the standard height of ponies, and appointing Sir Henry Simpson as official measurer. This act of legislation has succeeded beyond the hopes of its most enthusiastic advocates. Polo has spread rapidly, and it is difficult to keep pace with the new County Clubs that have been, and are being, founded every day.

For this great and sudden development there must be reasons, and these I find in the combination of increased pace and the greater science of late years. Polo is exactly like whist in the fact that success depends on the perfect combination of partners for a common end, and it resembles the latter pastime, too, in being a game of skill tempered by chance. The parallel might even be carried further, and we might say that, as at whist, the holding of honours is said to be even too great an advantage; so perhaps the honours of polo, which are to be found in first-class ponies, almost outweigh the advantage of the finest skill.

The charm of the modern combination and discipline, the pleasure of playing together in a well-organised team, is an unfailing source of enjoyment which we had not in the earlier days of polo. The man with a definite place in a team will take more pains, and make more sacrifices of time and money to the game, than would the mere unit driving a ball in a mixed crowd. And in this way the growth goes on. Clubs increase, the grounds are larger, the ponies faster, and the teams are better disciplined. There are a far larger number of first-class players now than

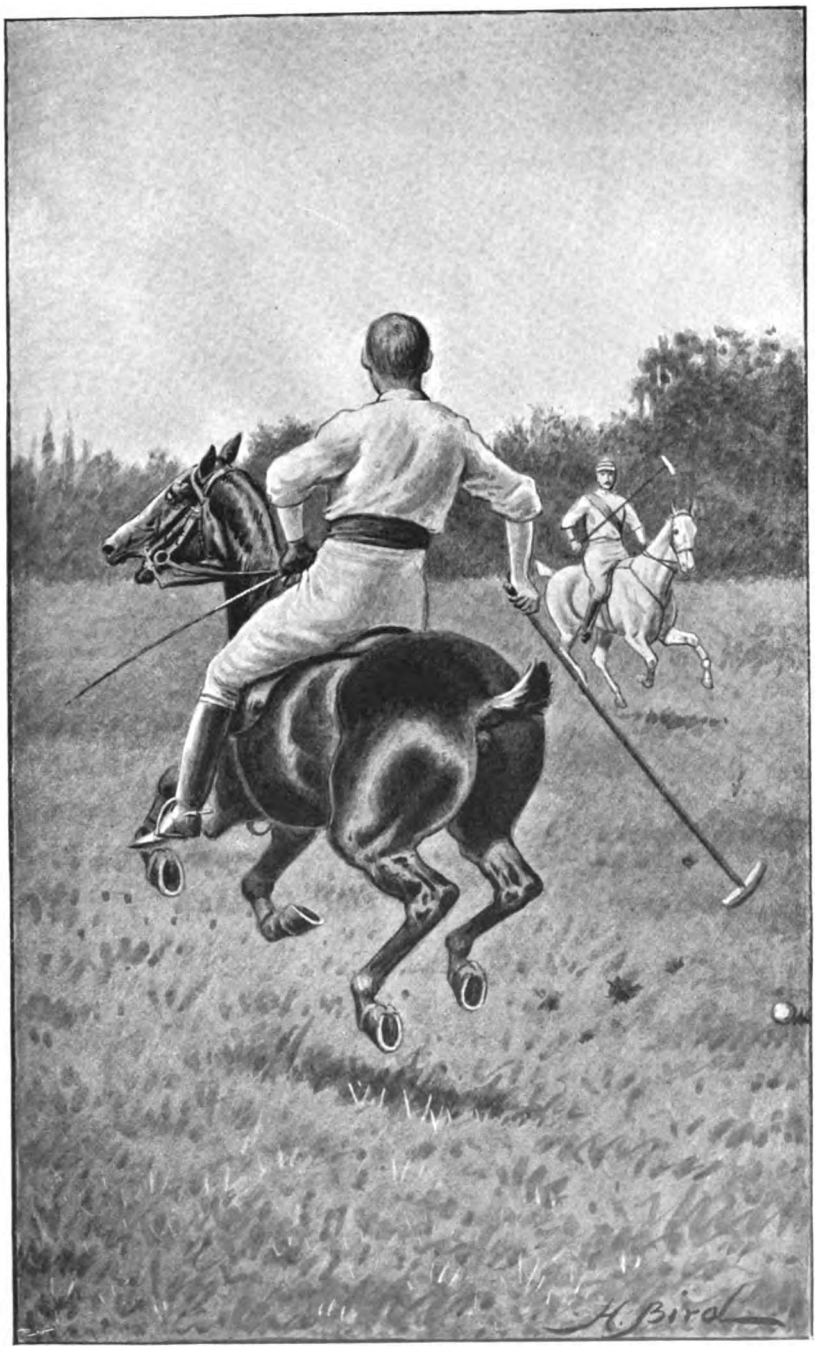
even two years ago, and it was only the other day that one of our very best players noted the enormous improvement that has been made during this time in military polo.

It is probable that, of first-class teams, the best now playing is that of the Durham Light Infantry. I have not seen those players myself, but men whose opinions I should place before my own tell me that as a team they are beyond praise. So much so is this the case, indeed, that the rise of the Durhams seems likely to affect the future development of the game.

But I can imagine someone fresh from seeing the play of our first-class teams at Hurlingham or Ranelagh asking, 'Have we not reached something very like perfection in polo?' The answer to this seems to be that, as we look back and argue from the past to the future, there are yet some points that call for improvement.

The first thing that strikes a horseman when watching the play, is the very imperfect breaking of many of the ponies. Though their quality, make, and shape leave but little to be desired, their manners and their action are far from perfect. Some ponies pull, others yaw about and are hard to turn, while but few get their hind legs well under them, and consequently sprawl when they are swung round quickly, and others bound in the air when nearing the ball. Yet these are often well-bred, fast ponies, with naturally good action and good tempered, and are only ignorant of their business because they have not been taught. Polo ponies in the future will need, and must have, far more prolonged, careful, and systematic training for their work. It would be impossible to go into details on this point in an article such as the present, but it may be said generally that polo ponies want much more slow work than they usually get. They need longer training in turning, stopping, and collecting themselves, and in school work of all kinds. They should require driving rather than holding when they are taken into the game, as the latter will call for an expenditure of strength on the part of the rider which no player can afford. Most men begin at the wrong end of a pony's education; for they are anxious to teach him the use of the stick and ball, forgetting, or not recognising, that any pony which is likely to play at all will very easily learn this *after* he has been gradually, thoroughly, and patiently schooled.

The next change I foresee is the better condition of the players themselves. How many matches are now lost because the players go to pieces for want of training? A man needs to be in first-rate condition to play six ten-minute periods right



THEIR MANNERS AND ACTION ARE FAR FROM PERFECT

through in a modern galloping game. If this be too hard a saying, it may be an open question whether the length of the matches should not be curtailed to forty or fifty minutes. At least seven matches out of ten are settled by one team going to pieces at or about half-time. The astonishing success of the Durhams is undoubtedly in great part due to the discipline, as severe as that of a college boat at Oxford or Cambridge, which watches over the condition of the men.

THE PLAYERS GO TO PIECES FOR WANT OF TRAINING

Again, another change that is wanted is for the partnership between men and ponies to be closer and more lasting. A good many ponies will pass through a stable before the owner finds four that suit him; and when he has succeeded in getting these he should cling to them, be the bidding at Tattersall's never so high or the offers from wealthy friends never so liberal. To be on a pony that suits him will be worth twenty-five per cent. on his play even to a good man, while to ride a pony that does not

suit him, will detract fifty per cent. from a moderate man's value in a team, even if it does not make him useless. Now, no team that desires success in first-class matches can afford to give away a single point; and as the standard of play progresses, as more good players come to the front and as the competition gets closer, this will be more than ever the case.

If a man has four, or even two or three, really good ponies, he will be in request for high-class matches, because he can be depended on to do his best. But no pony really suits a rider, at polo, till he has got used to him, and the longer the pony and man are together the more complete will be their partnership. It is wise therefore, after a careful and thorough trial, only to part with those animals on which a player finds he cannot do his best; but, on the other hand, to part with everything else rather than allow a dissolution of the partnership between him and those he can really trust.

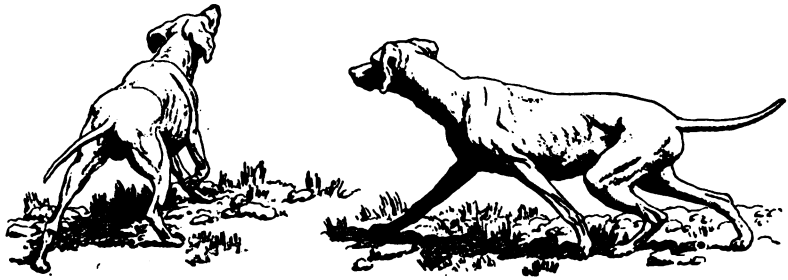
We also need to take a leaf out of the Indian Polo Association's Book, and to pay much more attention to the selection and duties of the umpire. I have written so much on this topic elsewhere that I will not enlarge on it here, except to note again its necessity and its inevitableness. Good matches are often spoilt for want of an efficient umpire; and good umpires are few and far between. A thorough knowledge of the rules, a quick eye, the power of making up his mind, the fact of having a mind to make up, and strict impartiality, are indispensable, and are not easy to obtain.

Then I think we need a system of handicapping. This has been found necessary in every sport, from the great game of racing down to the pastime of croquet. It is clearly desirable that polo teams of different classes should play together in certain tournaments. The present so-called handicap tournaments are not generally satisfactory. Practically, to put say twenty-eight names into a hat and draw them out by chance, and arrange them in teams that shall balance one another, is a difficult if not impossible task. The American plan of reckoning each man as worth so many goals to his side, would not do over here where combination is of the essence of the game, and individual prowess but a secondary matter. I confess I can see the desirability of a handicap, but have not been able to solve the problem satisfactorily. This much, however, is plain, that a team must be handicapped as a whole. But how? To make one team give goals to another would be difficult, the goal as such often meaning very little indeed, and yet I am not sure that this would not be better than

the present rough handicap obtained by excluding men who have played in such and such matches. The latter plan cuts out the best players, breaks up the best teams, and destroys most of the interest of the play.

Will some generous individual or club, by way of getting a solution of this point, give a cup for a handicap tournament, with, say, Sir Walter Smythe and Mr. E. D. Miller as handicappers? Each club should send in the name of its team, the team and not the individual to form the basis of the handicap—*e.g.* Freebooters and Rugby, scratch; Little Pedlington, +5; Royal Fencibles, +3, and so on.

Our present game is, when we come to think of it, a curious compound of many lands and many minds. Oriental in origin, and of which everything but the framework has been changed during its sojourn in the West, the game of polo has shown a great power of adopting and adapting hints from other and different pastimes—off-side from football or hockey, intelligent combination from whist, pace from the racing instinct of Englishmen—it combines present skill with those possibilities of future development. As a spectacle, its attractiveness has grown steadily with the increase of the skill and science shown; for a well-played game of polo has some of the deep excitement of a gladiatorial exhibition or a bull-fight, without the stain of blood or the reproach of brutality.



THAT MYSTERIOUS CADDIE

BY LADY DUNTZE

THE men all clamoured for him, he was so much brighter and more intelligent than the rest of the caddies at the St. Keriac Golf Links. He seemed by intuition to understand English, though he never spoke a word of it. He went further than that, he even understood the golfers' French, which in some instances appeared the height of thought-reading on his part. He was always apart from the other caddies, and they all hated him. His work over, he sped back home at once, and was only seen when following his calling.

When questioned about him, for the boy was interesting in appearance and tidier than his rivals (they could not be called companions), the ground-man said that he knew nothing about him beyond the fact that he lived with his mother in a solitary cottage some distance off. Jacques Moulins, for so he was called, never gave any trouble and was always civil; he wished all the others were like him, so did the golfers.

At last Donald Heriot, who was staying at a hotel near the links, succeeded in annexing the much-to-be-desired Jacques. He was a golf maniac, and intended doing at least two rounds a day while he remained there. Indeed, there was little else to do at St. Keriac but read on the beach.

'Venez toute matin dix heures à douze heures,' he said to the boy.

'Bien, monsieur,' replied Jacques with impassive face, but a twinkle in the grey, black-lashed eyes that seemed thrown away on a Breton peasant. 'Monsieur, me veut de dix heures jusqu'à midi tous les matins, et puis.'

'Je disais,' replied Donald, having come to the end of his French.

And with that enigmatical sentence Jacques had to be content for the time.

However, with the help of the ground-man he discovered that he was also required every afternoon.

'The best caddie I have ever had,' Donald Heriot would say. 'Seems to know by intuition what clubs you want, sees to an inch where the ball falls, and never dawdles behind just when you want him.'

THE CARELESS REMARK MADE HIM EXAMINE THE CADDIE MORE INTENTLY

'He looks delicate, poor little beggar!' said the man he addressed; 'half starved, I'm afraid.'

'I don't think so. I sometimes tell him to go and get something to eat at the hotel, and he always refuses,' replied Donald.

But the careless remark made him examine the caddie more intently than usual when next he did his round. Certainly the lad's face was very thin, so much so that he looked all eyes, and the skin was very delicate for a peasant living out of doors all day. At least so it seemed in the patches where it could be seen; for, alas! Jacques' face was not remarkable for its cleanliness, though his hands, brown though they were, were not ingrained

with dirt, St. Keriac fashion. Heriot was a most kind-hearted man, and having been a great traveller, he knew what it was to have insufficient food. In fact, he had gone through such privations some time since that he was now recuperating himself in this quiet place. He determined to find out more about Jacques.

'Où vivez-vous?' he asked him one day.

'Où je demeure, monsieur? par là,' said Jacques, pointing vaguely in the distance. And Donald's French was not equal to more demands on it. On this occasion, however, he tried to slip a five-franc piece into the boy's hand as he was leaving him. But Jacques flushed up furiously, and put his hands behind his back.

'Merci, monsieur, je suis bien payé,' he said.

'He must be a young duke in disguise,' laughed Donald to himself. But he did not try to tip the boy again.

One evening after dinner, which was at seven o'clock at that primitive place, Donald Heriot started for a walk. This was an unusual exercise for him at that hour, but the calm beauty of the evening tempted him. He strolled along the cliffs, gazing at the sea that lay shimmering in the moonlight; then a sudden fancy seized him to strike inland towards a clump of firs that were silhouetted clearly against the sky. As he neared this landmark he passed a cottage that looked rather more tidy than the ordinary run of Breton cottages.

'Should not be surprised if Jacques lived there,' he thought; 'he pointed this way when I asked him where he lived.'

He pictured a clean, tidy woman as Jacques' mother, a woman who must have known better days. She probably taught Jacques in the evenings after his work. And there was the woman herself, seated at a table working at some embroidery. A delicate-looking woman in shabby black, but with the stamp of refinement on her wasted features. But who was that girl by her side, writing as if her life depended on it? Not Jacques' sister, surely, though the likeness between them was striking, even to the soft curly rings of dark hair on the forehead, and the singularly long, jetty lashes. No, this girl must belong to another world than Jacques. And yet the extraordinary likeness! Still he could never imagine a sister of Jacques looking like this. Certainly the girl's face was clean, the boy's was always dirty, which made a remarkable difference. But this girl would not have been out of place in a drawing-room. She wore a pink shirt and a dark skirt, and Donald did not notice that the shirt

'OH! HELP ME, PLEASE; MOTHER IS ILL!'

was of calico and the skirt of frieze. In fact, he did not allow himself time to notice much, he felt ashamed of thus playing the spy, and turned away. But the picture he had seen haunted him all the way home—the weary look of sadness on the patient face of the woman, the hollowness of the girl's cheeks, the industry of the two.

'Some old Breton family tumbled into ruin,' he soliloquised. 'What a lovely girl that would be if she were properly fed! And what a life for those two poor women! Exiles here, without a kindred spirit to speak to. And one can do nothing for them. I can now understand why Jacques would not be tipped. I wonder he was not there, but I suppose he has gone to bed tired out, poor little beggar!'

Through his dreams that night those black-lashed eyes pursued him—the true Celtic eyes like those of Jacques. The next day he found himself looking at the boy more closely than he had ever done before. Poor little fellow! he, too, had wasted cheeks. How Heriot longed to send the family a good dinner!

Two or three nights later saw Donald again wandering past the cottage, but this time he carefully avoided looking in. He went to the group of firs this time, and remained looking down on the valley. The moon had risen and silvered the landscape, adding a beauty to it that in the daytime it lacked, for the country inland was not remarkable in any way. Heriot was retracing his steps and passing the cottage that had such a fascination for him, when the door was burst open, and the girl he had seen a few nights before rushed out into the road with a white scared face. When she saw Donald, she called out, 'Oh! help me, please; mother is ill!' and laid her hand on his arm.

Donald ran into the house, forgetting, in his excitement, to wonder at the girl's English. The woman, Jacques' mother, lay in a dead faint on the floor. Donald stooped down, felt her heart, and turned kindly-to the girl.

'Have you any brandy?' he asked.

'No, no!' she cried, wringing her hands.

'Is there a café near?'

'Not very far to the right, when you come to the cross-roads Oh, do fetch some!'

Donald dashed off, and soon found a house with a bunch of mistletoe in front of it, the sign in Brittany that drink is inside. He returned quickly, and poured some down the poor woman's throat. She revived slowly, and with Donald's help was taken into the adjoining bedroom.

'Come and speak to me when you have put your mother to bed,' he said to the girl.

Then he went out and waited, walking up and down the road.

These people then were English, or rather Irish, for there was just the faintest suspicion of brogue in the girl's accent. How on earth did they get to Brittany? And how were they reduced to such straits? He would make it his business to find out, and would insist on helping them now that fate had intervened and introduced him to them. He was still deep in his meditations when Kathleen came out: her mother had called her Kathleen.

She seemed to advance unwillingly, and very shyly.

'My mother tells me to thank you so much,' she said, 'and I cannot thank you enough. She is quite well now; she was very busy to-day, and received a letter this evening that upset her. I was very much frightened, as I have never seen her faint before, but I know she is well now.'

Heriot felt that he was being dismissed, but he was a man of stubborn will.

'I see that you want me to leave you,' he said; 'but I don't like to think of you being alone with your mother—she might faint again. Wake up your brother, at any rate.'

'I have no brother,' said Kathleen, unwittingly. Then she bit her lips with vexation.

'And Jacques?' asked Heriot.

Suddenly a light broke on him. On the girl's cheek there was a bruise distinctly visible, exactly where a golf ball had struck Jacques some days before, causing tears of pain to come into his eyes. With her wonderful intuition, Kathleen saw that she was recognised.

'*I am Jacques*,' she said, hanging her head.

Bit by bit the whole truth came out. Mrs. Grace, Kathleen's mother, had been left a widow some fifteen years ago, with a very small property in Ireland. Unable to live on the rent of this, she had migrated to Brittany, placed her little girl in a convent, where she was educated and kept in plenty, and lived on a pittance herself. When her daughter left the convent, this pittance became reduced again, and the Graces were in despair. Suddenly the idea struck Kathleen that, by moving to St. Keriac, where there were golf links, she might make a trifle over and above what her mother gained by embroidery, and she herself by copying manuscripts for an authoress in Paris, whose acquaintance she had made at the convent. Mrs. Grace was at first horrified at the

'HAVE YOU ANY BRANDY?' HE ASKED

idea, but Kathleen had her own way as usual. The outdoor life suited her, and was a pleasant change from writing, and in the evening she was glad to sit down and copy again. She made the concession to her mother of changing her clothes for the evening, and as no one ever entered the cottage, and the door was locked, and the shutters closed (except on one occasion, when Donald had looked in, an oversight on the mother's part), the secret of her sex was not suspected.

'I did not mean you to know,' said Kathleen, when she had finished; 'but now that you have found out I don't care. You have always been kind, and I know you will not tell anybody.'

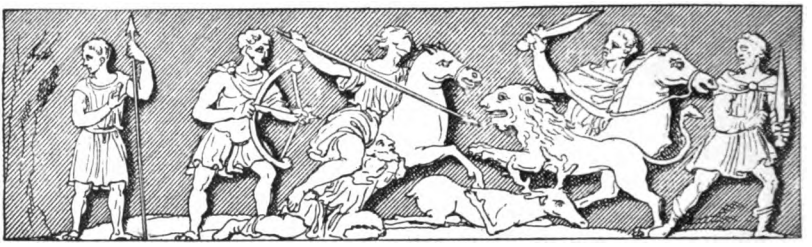
'Don't even suggest such a thing,' cried Donald; 'but, my dear Miss—Kathleen, you have been doing a very risky thing, and are liable to punishment for masquerading in boy's clothes.'

'In these days of bicycle costumes?' she asked saucily. 'But we heard to-day that our tenants are going to pay something; they have come into some money. And we are going away at once, only I told mother I was engaged to you for some time longer, and we must wait for that.'

'No, don't,' said Donald, impetuously; 'at least be engaged to me in another way.' Then, recollecting himself, he stopped; he must not take advantage of this girl's solitary position.

'I will come and see your mother to-morrow,' he said; 'now go in and rest.'

The result of the interview is soon told. Mrs. Grace was only overjoyed at the idea of her daughter making such a good match, for Heriot was a very well-to-do man and of good family. Kathleen at first demurred, but she consented to let Heriot follow them to Ireland, where they went immediately. Mrs. Donald Heriot is a champion golfer, and though she has been to a St. Keriac meeting since her marriage, no one has recognised in the well-dressed woman with rosy cheeks the mysterious little caddie who disappeared so suddenly some time before.



BEAR-SHOOTING IN ARCTIC LAPLAND

BY CUTCLIFFE HYNE

ONE of our great notions in wandering through so dismal a place as Arctic Lapland was to revel in sport which was unattainable elsewhere, and for a good many miles we had seen no living thing except mosquitos and frogs. We had more or less given up the idea of fishing, but we still held on to the theory that there was game to be found, and, in fact, calculated on it for food to see us across the country. And with these theories strong within us we crossed the great lake of Enare, and came to the settlement at its south-western angle, and began to push inquiries about the shooting, in deadly earnest.

The account was dismal enough. There was no vigorous close time here, as in Norway, and game was very scarce. Probably there never was much, but by vigorous hunting all the year round there has come to be less. Now it is not worth one's while to carry a gun in summer. There are rype, willow grouse, and capercailzie, which are fairly in evidence during the courting season, but as soon as family cares begin, they keep well to cover; and since the capercailzie cock has no taste for chickens, and bolts off *solus* so soon as ever the honeymoon is done, his haunts are in such far depths of the forests that man seldom gets so much as a glimpse of his wonderful plumage. Bird-shooting as an industry is not worth following in Lapland till the leaves have gone, and the snow makes everywhere a staring background.

And big game? Well, of course, the reindeer are all tame, or nominally so; and as for wolves and lynxes, these are mostly legendary. They have been shot—frequently shot—but for the most part round camp-fires, after the fishing yarns have come on.

And their skins are rare: these have a way of getting lost, as is explained in the tale. But foxes there are, both white and red, in tolerable numbers, and, of course, the occasional bear. These, again, are for the winter shooting, as it is only their winter coats which have a value. The fox is plentiful. A man who understands the work may put on *ski* for six consecutive days, and travel three hundred miles over the snow, and at the end of the week be owner of three average hides.

But a bear-hunt is a far more troublesome affair. When a track is found, the bear is promptly ringed. That is, the track is not followed up, but a man on *ski* leaves it at right angles, and working in slightly all the time towards the direction in which the bear was travelling, finally hits the spoor again where he had left it. If he has not seen the spoor in the meanwhile, the bear is somewhere within that ring.

There is no immediate hurry for the next move. Bears only shift their quarters two or three times during the course of the winter, and if undisturbed they will doze for a considerable while when once they have settled down. So if there is no immediate danger of a heavy fall of snow to obliterate the spoor, the finder goes back and organises the hunt at his leisure.

The number of hunters depends upon the two items of pluck and skill, but not more than four go as a general thing, as there is a distinctly commercial side to the business, and the fewer the guns the more there is to every share. The Government gives head-money; the merchant will pay anything between 4*l.* and 10*l.* English for the cleaned skins; and the beef, too, is an asset of value. A third share in a good bear is enough for a Lapp to marry on and set up a tidy farm, if he happen to be economical.

The winter light may be grey and small, but the snow looms white, and the spoor reads like a book. A bear breaks through any crust, and plunges elbow-deep at every stride. His belly trails along the snow and ploughs a great furrow. It takes the drifts of a gale to cover that track. But withal his highness is a scary person, and though he may sleep with shut eyes he keeps open ears and an active nose. So the callers have to tread with niceness and delicacy if they wish to make sure of an interview; and even supposing that they carry the spoor with them up to the pile of tumbled rocks where it ends, and the absence of back tracks show his bearship is at home, the hunt is by no means over even then. The bear will know quite well that enemies are at hand, but he will not rush them. He is no fool. On the contrary, he is an animal of infinite cunning and resource. And

he quite knows that in his stone redoubt there is at least one chance to three of brazening out the situation, and wearing his own hide for at least another season.

It takes a man of much more recklessness, or ignorance of the consequences, than the average Lapp hunter, to go into a cave of the rocks and deliberately invite a rough-and-tumble with a live brown bear.

But the hunters do their best to irritate him from a distance. They fire single shots into the darkness in the hope of riling him sufficiently to make a rush, so that the other guns which remain loaded may drop him when he comes into the open. They do this from every direction on which the cave mouth opens, so as to give him every chance of feeling a shot. And finally, if this method fails, they light a bonfire on his front door step and stand round on their *ski* to await results.

It is by no means certain that the smoke will reach him, for there may be quite possibly an outward air current, and the Lapps have produced their Rembrandtesque effect for no practical return. But if they have luck, and the stinging reek is too strong to be endured, then they have to stand by for quick shooting. The bear bolts like a rabbit, out of the firelight into the gloom, and in a matter of seconds he will be absorbed amongst the tree stems of the forest. There is something uncanny, something almost devilish in the way a Northern bear can adopt invisibility.

On the whole, then, when a bear is shot it is a day worth remembering, and all involved congratulate themselves on being incomparable hunters. There are plenty to listen to and envy them. Few men can say that they have not been concerned in a hunt. But in all last year head-money was only paid on seven bears in the whole of the Enare district, and that covers some 150,000 square miles. So whatever can be said against the Lapp as looking on hunting as a business, it must be granted that it comes to him as sport and enjoyment as well, or he would not embark in a trade which brings in such extremely frail dividends for so large a percentage of outlay in risk and exertion. If further proof were needed, it was there plain in Enare Town. The majority of the Lapps lived in snug wooden houses, tilled the ground, tended cattle, lived prosperous lives. The professional hunters were like the hunters of the States, practically outcasts, men of the outer air, it is true, and rare fellows, but in the riches of this life they were unacquisitive. When one of the rare windfalls came, they were generous, and it quickly went; and between whiles they and

theirs knew the grip of an empty belly. In Enare Town they lived in peat *gammer*, eyesores amongst the comely houses. Their wives were slatterns, their children ragged, their homes ringed round by squalor and poverty. They lived the free life of the forests, which is the best life of all, but they had to pay its price.

MY MAD MOTOR

BY HERBERT VIVIAN

I HAD travelled all along the Riviera on a bicycle, and found that, what with adverse winds and luncheon hours, and long stony hills, thoughtfully marked 'dangerous' by the touring clubs, it was as much as ever if I averaged five miles an hour during the week. I was walking on the Promenade de la Croisette at Cannes, ruminating over the vanity of bicycles, and swearing by the nine gods to ride them no more, when I spied a small gaping crowd collected outside a shop in the Rue Bossu. Crowds are easily collected by very paltry incidents in the South, and my curiosity would not have prompted me to step aside, but I had some business at the post office, and found that the centre of interest was the cycling school where I had hired my machine. The proprietor beckoned to me and introduced me to a motor tricycle, which was the cynosure of the street.

'That is the thing for you,' he exclaimed heartily. 'With it you will be independent of winds and hills, and you can easily run down to Genoa and back in the course of a day. An average of thirty or forty kilometres an hour is nothing to it, and you are spared all effort. It is a splendid chance for you. There is such

a run on these machines that the manufacturers cannot keep pace with the demand. But this one is to be sold for 1,200 francs instead of the 1,650 which it cost a few months ago.'

'Then I suppose it has some defect. Otherwise why should an article so much in demand be sold so cheap?'

'No, it is in perfect condition, as good as new. The owner is obliged to go on his military service and has no further use for it. If you want to make sure you are welcome to try it as long as you like.'

I began to be interested, and the man pushed the crowd aside for me to inspect the new toy. It was certainly very light and compact. At the rear was a small keg of petroleum, which only required replenishing every 100 kilometres, and in front a slender book-shaped box, charged with sufficient electricity for a fortnight. All you had to do was to jump into the tricycle from behind, turn the treadles to get started, press a knob to connect the electricity with the petroleum and you were off. There were two other knobs which would require adjusting from time to time in order to establish the right proportion of gas and air. A steel finger regulated the speed, and the machine may be stopped any instant by turning the end of the handle-bar towards you. It all seemed wonderfully simple, and the man assured me that in half an hour I could easily master every detail of the machine.

I had some qualms about the abrupt stoppage of the machine. A train going at a pace of some five-and-twenty miles an hour requires to be stopped gradually, and even then gives an awkward jolt at the last moment. Surely a tricycle, stopped dead in its headlong career of thirty or forty kilometres the hour, would send its rider flying headlong. But the man was positive that there was nothing to fear, and added that if I felt anxious I could stop the machine as gradually as I wished.

Accordingly I agreed that he should send it to my hotel for trial in the morning, and I retired to rest that night filled with all sorts of visions of joyous travels all over Europe, unfettered by the tyranny of time tables, the shortcomings of horseflesh, or the discouragement of steep ascents.

The day dawned bright and clear, the sea glistened in answer to the cloudless sky, and a gentle zephyr added lightness to the air. It was ideal Riviera weather, and my spirits rose at the prospect of the expedition. The machine exceeded my wildest expectations. It whizzed along at a great rate, but the movement was delightful, and I had no anxieties. The sharpest corners were turned with ease, I threaded my way through the most

intricate traffic without a qualm, and the machine seemed to answer to the lightest touch with all the intelligence of a thoroughbred. The stretch from Cannes to Nice is perhaps the best on the Corniche, a gentle downward slope nearly all the way, and I accomplished the twenty miles in little over half an hour. After an excellent breakfast at the 'London House,' perhaps the best restaurant in France, I mounted again and glided up the long steep hill out of Nice almost as easily as I had spun along the level. Clearly a motor tricycle was the ideal means of locomotion, and I vowed I would travel no other wise in future.

There were only a few blue bays to be rounded and another half-hour saw me outside the Café de Paris at Monte Carlo. I took a cooling drink, consigned my faithful tricycle to the care of an obsequious waiter, and strolled into the Temple of Fortune to try my luck at roulette. Everything seemed prosperous to-day, and I won 500 francs in no time, on the strength of which I allowed myself the best lunch which the famous kitchens of the Café Riche could provide.

Motor tricycles are still rare apparitions in the south of France, and I had a shrewd suspicion, when I mounted my machine again, that the choice spirits of the Café de Paris had been experimenting with it while I played. Anyhow, the speed had not suffered, for I was very soon rattling through Mentone and up the hill which leads to the Italian frontier.

I caught sight of the little white custom-house and sentry-box, on the French side of the road. A couple of gendarmes were walking slowly up and down, and I remembered that they would insist on my returning to Mentone to have a leaden seal affixed to my machine. However, half a mile's hill was nothing to me now, and I should not be so ill-humoured as I had been when they forced me to return on my bicycle some weeks previously. When I came up to them, they called out to me to pull up, and I cheerfully turned the end of my handle-bars, as I had been wont to do, expecting the machine to stop at once. The handle turned quite easily, but, to my amazement, it had no effect, and I was whirled along at a pace which seemed to increase rather than to diminish, across the bridge over the ravine, which separates Italy from France.

I heard an angry shout behind me, and for one long moment I half expected to have a bullet lodged in my back. But the formality of the leaden seal is only exacted in the cyclist's own interest, to facilitate his return into France, and does not warrant the use of force to prevent his departure. The gendarmes

THE WHOLE POPULATION SEEMED TO HAVE SUDDENLY ASSEMBLED

evidently reflected that it would be rather a strong measure to shoot a man for leaving France without a leaden seal. If he had been entering the country and had tried to evade the customs' dues by riding furiously past, it might have been a different matter.

I had just come to this satisfactory conclusion and begun to breathe again, when the sight of the Italian custom-house a hundred yards further up the road filled me with a choking dread. There were forty-two francs in gold to be paid for the entrance of a cycle into Italy, and in the present state of her finances such a sum would certainly not be allowed to slip through her fingers. I tugged at my handle-bar with all the frantic energy of despair, but I might as well have tugged at the handle of a railway carriage in full motion. I looked at the sheer rock beside the road and wondered whether I should not do better to run my machine straight into it. But the pace was now terrific, although the hill was decidedly steep, and I was certain to break several limbs if not to lose my life.

It seemed as if my motor had suddenly gone mad, taken its bit, or whatever answers to a motor's bit, between its teeth, and determined to forge ahead until its supply of petroleum should be exhausted. I leaned down and pushed back the knob which should have slackened the speed. But my action had no effect whatever. No doubt the waiters of the Café de Paris had contrived to disturb some connection on which the pace and stoppage depended.

I had neither time nor presence of mind to pull out money and offer it as a sop to the Italian officials. Some half-dozen of them, in their picturesque three-cornered hats and sweeping cocks' feathers, had gathered outside to witness the arrival of my head-long machine. I called out to them that I was unable to stop it, but they did not seem to understand and spread themselves across the road to bar my way. I shouted wildly, but they did not move until I was actually upon them, and then so late that my right wheel passed over one of their feet.

There was a vicious howl as I swept up the hill, then a hurried consultation and a shot fired over my head as a warning. The echo of it reverberated for miles in the direction of Ventimiglia, and I made myself very small to avoid the consequences of the next discharge. It was not very far from the next bend in the road, when I heard a loud report and felt a number of stinging pricks all over my head, neck, and back. The gendarmes had evidently been so considerate as to content themselves with a discharge of shot. My wounds gave me pain, but I rounded the

corner and rejoiced that I had contrived to escape with my life. My jubilation did not, however, last long, for I reflected that the Italian frontier would certainly be guarded more effectually than by the presence of a handful of gendarmes in one guard-house. The shots would have set a whole array of coastguardsmen on the alert, even if there were no telegraphic means of apprising them of a violation of the frontier. I should find plenty of armed men to waylay me before this cursed machine had exhausted its store of motive petroleum.

I turned round and wrenched at the petroleum-keg, but it was of no avail, and I cursed my folly in being armed with neither dagger nor revolver, whereby it might have been destroyed. I attacked the electrical apparatus in front and easily wrenched it off, but this only deprived me of the means of starting the machine again, and had no effect upon my present pace. Then it occurred to me that, if I could not stop this fiendish tricycle, I could at least turn it round and return to France, where I should no longer be menaced with guns and bayonets.

By this time I had entered the village of Mortola, where a number of children were playing at a sort of hopscotch in the road. I holloaed and tried to dodge them, but they only grinned at me, and my tricycle passed right over the body of a boy of three, leaving him senseless on the road, and almost jerking me out of my saddle. I took the opportunity of an open space to turn the machine, but the place was not very broad, and I came into rough collision with a haycart, breaking a spoke of my right wheel in the process and receiving a bad blow on my left arm. The child still lay senseless, and the whole population seemed to have suddenly assembled to avenge it. They growled menacingly at me, but they were not quick enough to concert measures against me, and I was soon out of their reach. A hail of stones followed me, but all fell wide except one, which struck the petroleum keg loudly and left a deep dent.

I was now going downhill at lightning speed. However, I felt easier in mind, for the Italian officials could have nothing against my return to France, and the French had seen me pass so recently that they might be counted upon to waive formalities. If I could only steer clear of accidents for a few hours until the petroleum should be exhausted, I might escape with my life from this most parlous adventure. My shot wounds were, however, exceedingly painful, and when I put up my hand to my neck I withdrew it covered with blood.

When I sighted the Italian custom-house again the gendarmes

THE LAST THING I REMEMBER WAS A VIOLENT BLOW ON MY HEAD

were still there, gaping up the road. My appearance set them gesticulating at each other with bewildering vehemence. They had evidently by no means made up their minds that my return atoned for my want of ceremony in entering the country, and I began to regret that I had ventured into this hornets' nest again. However, they evidently decided that the time for firing at me was past. But one of them put out his gun to impede my progress. If I had not been travelling so fast he might have succeeded, but as it was my machine brushed his gun aside as if it had been a straw. The bayonet, however, glittered close to my tyre and gave me the idea that a puncture might have been useful in checking my fearful pace. So I whipped a penknife out of my pocket and applied it very carefully to the left wheel. The knife was whisked out of my hand and hurled into the road, gashing my wrist in the process, but there was a loud report and I saw the tyre had gone flat. Alas! however, it availed me nothing, and the maimed machine, acquiring fresh impetus as it fled downhill, seemed as if it were determined to go on for ever.

Rumbling over the frontier bridge I found two French gendarmes standing in the middle of the road with the butt ends of their rifles uplifted. It was impossible to dodge them, and the last thing I remember was a violent blow on my head, two gendarmes on their backs in the dust, and my machine also on its back, with its wheels still spinning madly in the air.

My friends say the whole episode was a dream, and it is certainly true that the chambermaid found me on the floor of my room, stunned by the fall of a curtain-rod at the top of my bed. My neck was much marked by mosquito bites and I had a bad bruise on my left arm, besides an inexplicable cut on my wrist. But the strangest part of the story is, that when, some days later, I was well enough to visit the motor-tricycle, I found the tyre of the left wheel had been punctured, the electric box was severed, a spoke of the right wheel was broken, and the petroleum keg had a dent in it. The hotel people aver that the machine had been shut up all the time, and that no one could have tampered with it; but I cannot yet bring myself to mount the uncanny creature, which I still shrewdly suspect of having had some share in my mad ride.

LADIES' GOLF

BY LOUIE MACKERN AND E. M. BOYS

It is necessary in writing an account of the Ladies' Golf Union to give a short sketch of its origin and rise.

Early in 1893 two or three ardent members of the Wimbledon Ladies' Golf Club started the idea of arranging a Ladies' Championship, and enlisted the advice and services of a clever organiser and enthusiastic golfer, in the person of Mr. Laidlaw Purves. He at once advised that all the other recognised ladies' golf clubs should be invited to co-operate and to give their views on the subject. Circulars were accordingly sent out, and a meeting called for April 19, 1893. This meeting was, virtually, the birth of the Ladies' Golf Union. It is, perhaps, hardly necessary to go into the details of its formation, but it is enough to say that it consists of Vice-Presidents, Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Secretary, and a Council formed of delegates from all affiliated clubs. The primary objects of the Union are, to quote from their 'Annual:'

1. 'To promote the interests of the game of golf.
2. 'To obtain an uniformity of rules of the game by establishing a representative legislative authority.
3. 'To establish an uniform system of handicapping.
4. 'To act as a tribunal and court of reference on points of uncertainty.
5. 'To arrange the Annual Championship Competition, and to obtain the funds necessary for that purpose.'

As to the Rules of the Union, formation of Council, entrance fees and annual subscriptions, &c., are they not written in the four volumes of the 'Ladies' Golf Union Annual' already published?

And now, as, of course, the first result of the formation of the Union was the Ladies' Championship of 1893, we will take the five objects of the Union in their reverse order.

The first Championship was held in June 1893, on the links of the Lytham and St. Anne's Ladies' Golf Club. To this club is due much praise for so loyally giving up their own scheme of a Ladies' Championship (which they had just formulated and even advertised) in favour of the more comprehensive programme of the Union. For this first Championship there were thirty-eight entries, the winner being Lady Margaret Scott, who defeated Miss Isette Pearson in the final heat. The following year, 1894, the Championship was held at Littlestone-on-Sea, when there

MISS PASCOE PUTTING

were sixty-four entries, the winner again being Lady Margaret Scott, who once more met Miss Pearson in the finals.

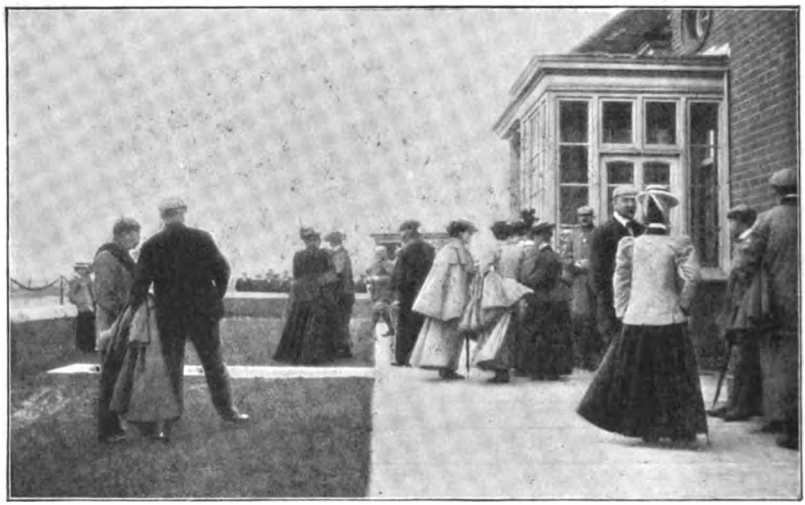
For the 1895 Championship, at Portrush, there were eighty-four entries, Lady Margaret Scott being for the third time winner, beating Miss Lythgoe in the last round.

The 1896 Championship was held at Hoylake, when eighty-two competitors entered. Miss Pascoe won, defeating Miss Lena Thomson in the finals.

The Championship of 1897 formed a new departure in the annals of the Union, as, being held in Scotland (Gullane), a large contingent of Scotch players entered among the hundred and two names that were sent in. It had been a matter for sincere regret

that none of the many fine Scotch players had ever before entered for the Championship. They certainly gave a very good account of themselves by their performances last year at Gullane, as, out of the four players left in for the semi-finals, three were Scotch. The finals were played by two sisters, Miss Orr and Miss E. C. Orr, the latter winning by four up and three to play.

The Championship this year, held in May at Great Yarmouth, was certainly a corroboration of the saying that 'it is the unexpected that happens.' The small number of the entries (seventy-seven), the non-appearance of the holder of the Championship, the absence, *en bloc*, of the Scotch players, the number of 'dark horses'—these and many other surprises were in store for



OUTSIDE THE CLUB HOUSE

those keen golfers who found their way to the quaint little town on the bleak East Coast.

Even more disappointing than the falling off in the number of entries was the absence of the Scotch players, who in the Championship meeting at Gullane had mustered thirty-eight strong. This year there was only one entrant from north of the Border. Everyone who had seen the magnificent play of the ex-champion, Miss E. C. Orr, and that of many of the other Scotch golfers, most sincerely regretted their absence this year. Surely it would have been but commonly sporting to have pitted their skill against that of their English rivals on an English links. It is fairly safe to say that, had they done so, there might easily

have been a reversal of last year's odds. All the arrangements for the Championship were most ably carried out by the Ladies' Golf Union; and, through the untiring energy and capacity and the unfailing kindness of the Hon. Secretary, Miss Isette Pearson, the meeting was carried to a highly successful conclusion. Every assistance was most courteously given by the Captain (Mr. F. S. Ireland) and members of the Great Yarmouth Golf Club, who very kindly handed over their charming Club House to the Union for the use of the competitors in the Championship.

The course was a good deal altered, and some of the tees shortened, by a special Championship Committee elected by the Council of the Union. And here it must be said that the course

MISS ISETTE PEARSON APPROACHING

decided upon was not a typically good one for the Championship. The total length was 4,183 yards, but there were not enough long holes, only three being over 300 yards in length. There was too great a preponderance of holes requiring merely a drive and an iron or cleek shot to reach the green, *fourteen* out of the eighteen being of this character. Thus, with the exception of the three long holes, there was no opportunity for brassy play, which is certainly one of the strong points of many of the best lady golfers. Another great defect of the course, but one quite out of the power of the Championship Committee to alter, was the great amount of blown sand upon it. During the furious gales of wind from the east and north-east which raged for the last three days

of the meeting, the sand was often blown in dense drifts right across the course. The carries from the tees were not long, but this was amply made up for by some truly awful bunkers, which yawned deep and wide. The greens were good, with the exception of three or four very rough ones, being for the most part beautifully undulating, and needing great judgment to negotiate successfully. There was some excellent golf seen in some of the matches, and an extraordinary number were halved, having to be decided on the nineteenth or subsequent greens. In the opinion of the writer, and also according to the openly expressed views of a large majority of the experienced onlookers, the best golfer present, and the one who played throughout the most consistently good game, was undoubtedly Miss Isette Pearson. She had the hardest luck in the draw of any of the good players, no fewer than four out of the five matches played by her being decided on the eighteenth, nineteenth, or twentieth greens. Her play was often extremely brilliant, and always conspicuous for perfect steadiness, coolness of judgment, and a fine sporting spirit. And when one realises the responsibility that weighs upon her shoulders during the Championship as Secretary of the Union, it is not too much to say that Miss Pearson's performance was a fine and a notable one.

Of the week's surprises one of the most astonishing was Miss Pearson's defeat by Miss E. Nevile, after having been dormy 3. But it is only fair to the former to say that she was suffering from a very severe cold, and had that morning gone through the strain of a very tight match with Miss Pascoe, whom she only defeated on the twentieth green. Miss Pascoe played magnificently in all her three matches, though she met no worthy opponent till the fourth heat, when she was beaten by Miss Pearson, after having been dormy 2. This match and the one in the first heat between Miss Pearson and Miss Armstrong were undoubtedly the finest displays of good all-round golf seen at the Championship.

Miss Thomson, this year's champion, is an excellent golfer, with a very pretty quiet style, great accuracy, and perfect nerve and judgment. Without in any way disparaging her play, one may say that Miss Thomson had considerable good fortune in her matches, all, with the exception of one in the fourth heat, being easy victories for her. Her play in the finals was extraordinarily good. She hardly made a mistake, her approaching and putting were perfect, and when at the thirteenth green she won the match (and the Championship) by 6 up and 5 to play there was not a dissentient voice in the chorus of congratulation that overwhelmed her.

In speaking of the management of the Championship, it is impossible to praise too highly the excellent and business-like arrangements made by the Hon. Secretary of the Union, Miss Isette Pearson, and her unfailing tact, kindness, and consideration. And all the time and thought spent by her for others are, it must be remembered, at the expense of her own chances in the competition. For though, of course, she has able assistance, and many willing and capable helpers, it is she who 'makes the wheels go round,' and that, too, without a squeak or a jolt.

And now to turn to the aims of the Union. Though its desire is to act as a friendly tribunal and court of reference on points of uncertainty, it deprecates entirely any wish to

WINNER OF CHAMPIONSHIP
MISS LENA THOMSON, LADIES' GOLF CLUB

dictate to the various clubs affiliated to it; but rather it hopes to encourage an universality of aims among the clubs. Indeed, one of the most important effects that the Union desires to have is to increase that sense of comradeship which should exist among all true golfers. In all games and sports this is an essential quality if the best results are to be expected. The Union certainly does its best to draw all golfers together, and to give them common aims and ambitions. In every way it is most important to encourage this feeling; for in games, as in most other things, women are prone to lose sight of the *general* good, through a certain smallness of outlook. Anything that narrows down a conception, whether of a game, of a theory, or

of conduct, must tend to decrease its usefulness; conversely, anything that helps to broaden out that conception is to be unreservedly welcomed.

One of the most practical uses of the Union is shown by the effort it is making to establish an uniform system of handicapping. Naturally, the main idea of any system of handicapping is that the handicap of each individual member should be some guide to the quality of her play. Hitherto the handicaps of many clubs have been utterly misleading, as managers of open meetings have found, to their dismay. Thus some very nearly scratch players send in their handicap as 18 or 19, because that is what they play with on long links, against men. On the other hand, players who would want six strokes from a really scratch player send in their handicap as scratch, because, being the best players in a small club with short links, their best score is considered the par of the green.

Now the Union scheme is, roughly, this: Find the true par of the green as scored by a really scratch player, allowing two putts on each green, and, as a rule, counting a hole under 120 yards a 3; one under 240 a 4; and one under 320 a 5. Of course, the position and frequency of hazards, and the lies to be found through the green, have to be considered, and two or three strokes allowed for bad luck or misadventure, over and above the actual score for the eighteen holes. The handicap of each member is then arrived at by taking the best score made by that member and doubling it, adding the next best score. The average of those three scores is then struck, and the difference between it and the par of the green is that member's handicap. It is very easy for outsiders to criticise this system and its working. But in common fairness it must be allowed that the result of this first year's trial is, on the whole, a highly satisfactory one, especially when we consider the many initial difficulties in the way. Out of the twenty-three clubs competing for the silver medals offered by the Union for the best aggregate of four scores returned in medal competitions in each club, eleven of the winners' scores averaged within two strokes of the par of the green. Only in two cases did the difference exceed four strokes. The Handicapping Committee of the Union are perfectly hopeful that at no very distant date their system of handicapping will have attained its object, and that each individual member's handicap will represent the quality of her play.

In conclusion, one may say that it is almost impossible to over-estimate the extraordinary improvement that has taken place

in ladies' golf during the last three or four years. The game is now taken up thoroughly and seriously, and played in deadly earnest. Of course, the earnestness displayed by some very indifferent players over their utterly feeble performances would move the grimmest cynic to a smile of pity. But we have it on the highest authority that the population of these islands consists mostly of fools; so how can even the ranks of the elect (*i.e.* golfers) hope to escape a few stragglers from the great army of idiots? Thus a fool, hot and weary in a bunker, calls faintly to a fellow-fool, 'How many strokes have you played, dear?' 'Twenty-seven, I think.' 'Oh! then I give up the hole.' Then there are the lesser fools who can play a little (a *very* little), yet

THE MEDALLISTS. MISS L. THOMSON (GOLD), MISS E. NEVILE (SILVER), MISS DOD AND MISS A. BARWELL (BRONZE)

who enter cheerfully for every Open Meeting within a hundred miles, and who trip off gaily to the Championship, dragging unwilling husbands or other relations to witness their discomfiture. But, apart from these self-deluded mortals, how good it is to see the thoroughness with which so many women now play the game! They go at it resolved to do their level best, to play golf as it should be played, to funk nothing, neither long carries nor difficult hazards. The standard of first-class play has wonderfully advanced. There is a far greater steadiness and sureness of play, less fluctuation in the form shown, and even greater brilliancy. There is also a large class of players, just slightly inferior to the very first flight, who play a very dashing game, but who

are wanting in the thoroughness and nerve which go so largely to make up really first-class golf. For it is in the soundness of judgment, and in the perfect nerve of the first-rate players, that their superiority lies. The best players know always just the right club to take, when to make a plucky bid for the hole, and when to refrain and play for a certain half; they understand the exact line to take in a difficult putt. In short, they have learnt by experience and observation what is still lacking in the play of their brilliant but unfinished rivals. As long as there are women who are plucky and hardy, and who do not shirk difficulties, just so long will golf be played, and *well* played, by women.

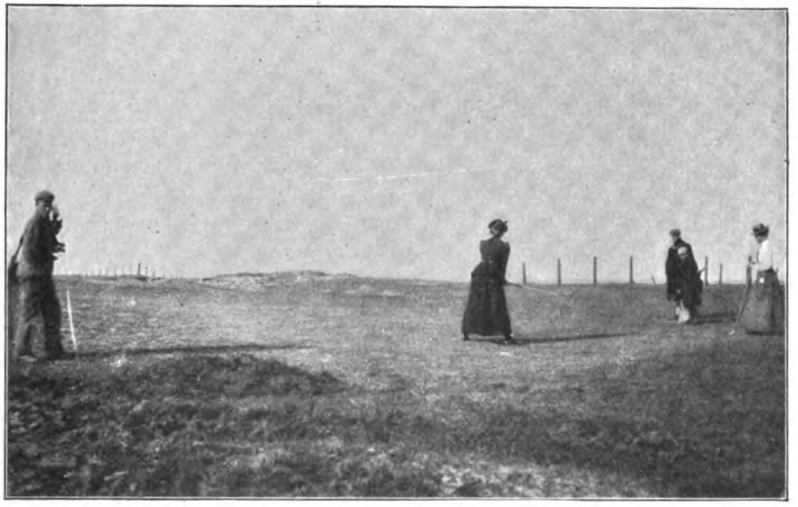
LOUIE MACKERN.

THE GAME IN ITS DIFFERENT ASPECTS

It would be impossible to describe all the different aspects of 'the royal and ancient game:' they are so numerous that only the pen of a Horace Hutchinson could write them and a folio of Johnsonian bulk contain them. With but limited space, we must be content, therefore, to take a few only for the text of these remarks.

First, let us turn our attention to the aspects of driving, of which there may be said to be two distinct styles, the full circular swing and the half or three-quarter swing. Few women are physically strong enough for the effort a full swing entails. Of course, there are exceptions: a tall, muscular woman with long arms is as capable of taking a full swing as any man; but for the average slightly built woman of from 5 ft. 3 in. to 5 ft. 6 in., who has only learnt to play golf since she was grown up, such a swing is unquestionably a mistake. Practically, the idea of a full swing or sweep is that the player in the downward stroke will have the longer distance for concentration of speed and strength. Without accuracy, however, these are worthless, and unless the club in the upward swing performs a perfect circular sweep, with the arms at the correct angle to the body, in the downward stroke it will be pulled and the ball struck wildly. The position engendered by a full swing does not appear to be easily acquired by women. When the club arrives at the nape of the neck the body is in a strained attitude, and when swinging the club downwards the player involuntarily draws her arms in, changes the position of her feet, or dips her right leg;

any of which errors, it is almost unnecessary to say, are fatal to the driving of a 'clean' ball. Into the half and three-quarter swing as much strength and speed as a woman is capable of is concentrated, with also far greater accuracy. The eyes do not become strained, as is so frequently the case during the 'slow back' of the full swing, the player remains in a natural position, and the club will follow through after the ball is hit without being pulled across the body. It is principally in the follow through that the half swing shows its superiority. A straight follow through will increase the distance the ball travels on the ground by twenty or thirty yards. Constantly in the downward sweep of the full drive the ball gets pulled, for the inclination of the arms



HALF SWING

is to complete the circle and finish the drive with the club almost over the left shoulder, instead of in a direct line above the head, the normal position of the club at the termination of the follow through of the half swing.

Balls played in this style have also a much longer 'carry,' as they are never so much 'skied,' and with a woman's limited strength it is obviously a disadvantage to loft a ball more than is required for the carrying of hazards, for a lofted ball has so much less run than a low-hit ball.

A player who has mastered the technicalities of a full circular swing can out-distance a player who drives with a half swing; but, on the other hand, the former probably fails to hit the ball

'clean' in the majority of her drives, while the latter will succeed more often than she fails, with the result that at the end of a round the half or three-quarter swing will have covered far more ground than the full swing. The two styles found able exponents at this year's championship competition at Great Yarmouth. Among the well-known players who used the half or three-quarter swing were Miss M. Armstrong, Miss Dod, and Mrs. Ryder Richardson. Miss Armstrong, in her match against Miss Pearson, drove magnificent long balls with admirable grace and ease, and out-drove her opponent, who uses a full swing, ten times out of the nineteen drives, the other nine being equal. Miss Pearson, who drives a very long ball, may possibly not have been up to her usual form, but, if so, it is only another instance of the uncertainty of the full swing. Miss Dod is popularly supposed to be one of the longest drivers in England, and her follow through is perfect. Mrs. Ryder Richardson's style is so well known that it is needless to comment upon it. In a driving competition at an open meeting of a northern club not long ago, for which a large number of ladies competed, many of whom were noted players, Miss Dod won the first place, and Mrs. Ryder Richardson the second.

Considering the two styles purely from the point of elegance, the most purblind must allow that the three-quarter or half swing has the advantage. The 'Badminton Golf,' after devoting twenty pages to the technicalities of elementary instruction in driving, condenses the remarks on ladies' driving into one short paragraph, and advocates the half swing for ladies, because 'the posture and gesture requisite for a full swing are not particularly graceful.'

Undoubtedly, very few ladies look graceful while driving with a full swing, for ninety-eight out of a hundred exaggerate the swing grotesquely. I have seen small women attack a drive with such vigour that, after striking the ball, their bodies swing right round with the impetus of the stroke; others will twist their arms and legs into weird and wonderful positions; in fact, peculiarities in driving in this style are too numerous to mention, while with the half or three-quarter swing there is no scope for individual eccentricities.

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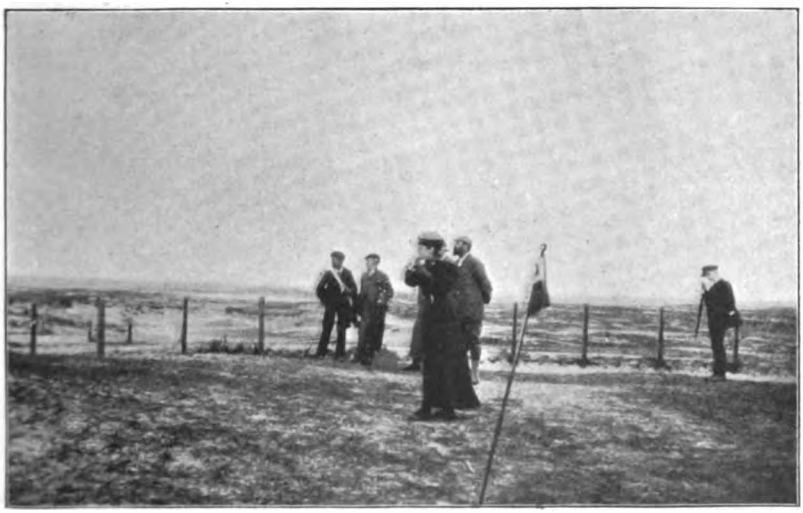
Almost all lady golfers are imbued with the theory that driving is the important part of golf, while, in reality, much more can be accomplished, both in match and medal play, by good approach shots and steady putting. More matches are lost and scores ruined through ignorance of approach play than appears

credible. Want of judgment is in nine cases out of ten the real reason of women's weakness in approaching. A first-class golfer, who plays a fine brassy game, will often take this club to approach, when it is obvious to the onlooker that it is a cleek or iron stroke. No player can ever become so accurate with a brassy that she can use it for approaching; even if she is 'off' her iron clubs, it is wiser to persevere until recovery, rather than use a brassy for this purpose. Nor is sufficient attention given to short approach play; many golfers, who can play an otherwise strong game, fail utterly at approach shots when at a distance of forty or fifty yards from the green. In fact, it is by no means uncommon (on inland links more especially) to see a lady approaching from this distance



MISS LYTHGOE DRIVING

with a putter. By particularising 'inland' links, I mean no disparagement; but, on 'seashore' links, greens are often placed on grassy knolls guarded by natural sand bunkers, and these, of course, render approaching with a putter quite out of the question. There is a hole on a certain seashore links, well known to many golfers, where the green is on a small plateau, which slopes gently from the centre and is entirely surrounded by deep sand bunkers. Such a hole presents no difficulties to good golfers, for an expert at approaching can lay the ball dead on the green by a cut, which prevents it rolling off into the bunkers. On the other hand, it is on occasions such as these that slovenly players come utterly to grief.

Undoubtedly, there is no part of golf so difficult to master, but, when mastered, there is nothing repays so fully. A fine approach player constantly saves a stroke on the green by laying the ball dead, while with a putter it is impossible to do more than run the ball on to the green; for, when sending it through rough grass, the player is quite unable to regulate the strength of the shot, and it is only by chance that the ball is in this way ever laid dead.

There is a theory extant that the 'weaker sex' is (if one may use such a paradox) the stronger at putting; but, after some years' experience, I must candidly confess that I have always found women painfully erratic putters. Of course, there are brilliant exceptions; but, speaking collectively, I have not found women to be much superior in this respect to men. The few really good putters are, curiously enough, generally weak in their play through the green or in their driving, and one rarely meets a player who is proficient in all three. 'Putting is an Inspiration,' we are told, but I am more inclined to agree with the man who so sapiently said, 'Putting is the Devil!' On days when every putt goes down, no matter how remote you may be from the hole, you are ready to say proudly, 'Putting is an Inspiration,' but on other days, when you are losing hole after hole through atrocious putting, you would fain proclaim aloud the other sentiment. Practising putting on a lawn is very little assistance, except in improving the aim. Every putting green is (or ought to be) different from the last. Inland putting greens, with their heavy clay soil and constant worm-casts, require to be played on in quite a different manner from the short crisp grass of the seashore greens. There is much difference of opinion as to the relative merits of a wooden or an iron putter; but, when putting badly with one club, it is often very efficacious to change your putter for that day.

MISS PEARSON,
HON. SEC. LADIES' GOLF UNION

To possess proper clubs is so important a point that it is extra-

ordinary, and beginners are not made to realise it more than they appear to do. They constantly learn to play with cast-off clubs of their male relations. This is an egregious mistake, with iron clubs more particularly, as a bad iron club will suit no one. With driving clubs there is more scope for individual taste, but no beginner should use discarded clubs. Let her go to a professional club maker, and request him to select for her the necessary clubs. Do not, however, be led astray and have too many, as others can be added later, when the novice becomes educated to their different spheres of usefulness. I should recommend a driver not too long in the shaft, and with a light head; the shaft should be springy, those made of Texa wood being excellent. The head can always be made lighter by cutting out some of the lead at the back. A brassy, slightly shorter in the shaft and stiffer, also more laid back, than the driver. Then, for iron clubs, a cleek is not absolutely necessary (though many players prefer it to any other club), as a brassy will often do its work, and when the lie is too bad for a wooden club an iron will be found more serviceable. A mashy and an iron or wooden putter should complete the set.

Of course a niblick is a most useful tool in an emergency, but I should never recommend a player to take it out if she is going to caddie for herself; the extra weight is not advisable, and the occasions when it is wanted, on most links, are very rare.

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Golf for ladies was condemned so vehemently some years ago, that it is curious how it has attained to such a recognised position as a woman's game. Played in moderation, it will never injure anyone's health, but it is in the definition of moderation that women are so mistaken.

Golfers—I refer to ladies—might be divided into three classes: the Sportswoman; the Enthusiast, or Pot-hunter; and the Ignorant.

Let us try to briefly define them.

A Sportswoman is one who loves sport for itself, and not for what it will bring. As golfers, sportswomen are a judicious blend of keenness and sense. Content to play once or twice a week, their play seldom suffers from staleness; they never play, if they can avoid it, in rain or in a gale of wind, and when they get 'off their game,' wisely refrain altogether from playing for a few days. They take a keen interest in their home club, and are always eager to assist their captain in her efforts to promote inter-club matches and the interests of the club in general; and it is among the ranks of these sportswomen that

the best golfers are to be found. A large proportion of this class of player is to be met with north of the Tweed, chiefly because the scratch golfers in Scotland have played since they were children, and a genuine love of the game has become inherent in their nature. The number of ladies' clubs, too, is small in comparison with England, so the numerous baits to 'pot-hunters,' in the shape of open meetings, do not beset their path to the same degree.

On the other hand, the Enthusiasts, or Pot-hunters, play, if possible, every day of the week, and in all weathers; in fact, they are quite oblivious of rain, and playing during a gale of wind is only considered good practice, with the result that many of them break down. It is by no means uncommon to hear of a lady straining herself, and being obliged in consequence to give up golf entirely for some months, or contracting a bad chill from a thorough wetting, which may settle on her lungs if she is delicate. 'Pot-hunting,' or what has more aptly been termed 'the Cult of the Biscuit Box,' is rapidly ruining golf—and, for that matter, all games—from a sporting point of view. There are a regular set, belonging to this 'Cult,' who go from open meeting to open meeting, 'pot-hunting,' and appear to regard the game only as a means to that end. They will unblushingly try to keep their handicap up to have more chance of achieving their ambition, and I have even heard a golfer of this class regretting that she has been unfortunate enough to win a monthly medal just before a spring or autumn meeting, and, in consequence, lowered her handicap, and so reduced her chance of winning 'pots.' Another, if belonging to two or three clubs, will, when sending her name and handicap to the secretary of some club which is holding an open meeting, give the highest handicap of the three, and not mention that she is a member of the other two clubs, or that her handicap in them is considerably less. Possibly the worse trait in their character is that they have no genuine *esprit de corps*, but will unhesitatingly throw their captain on the horns of a dilemma by refusing to play in an inter-club match if another engagement of a more fascinating description is suggested to them at the last moment.

We now come to the members of the 'Ignorant' class, or in other words, the beginners, who, one might say, always remain beginners, the despair of professional instructors and the bugbear of every club. They chip along the course, cutting up the grass, day after day, never doing any hole under double figures, and yet cheerfully enter any competition for which they are eligible.

Their chief characteristics are unfailing good nature from utter indifference and a dogged determination, which makes them go on, though they never improve, year after year.

There are some members of all three classes who bring lady golfers into ridicule by wearing as 'mannish' clothes as possible. They are to be seen with soft hunting ties, loose red shapeless coats, and the shortest and narrowest of bicycling skirts. Why bicycling skirts for golf? the reader may be moved to ask. Why, indeed! After giving the subject much thought, the only obvious explanation is that bicycling skirts are made to open at the sides, and are thus very adaptable for side pockets. To

SPECTATORS AT THE FIRST TEE

show the use of these pockets I must endeavour to draw a thumb-nail sketch of a golfer of this description attired in complete armour. Her hair is dragged up into a knot on the top of her head, on to which a man's cap is fixed (how, is not apparent); underneath is a tan-coloured face, from constant exposure to the elements without any of the protection which an ordinary sailor hat affords. A soft white hunting tie, fastened with a pin (an enblem of the game in some form or other), a loose red coat and a narrow bicycling skirt, into the aforesaid pockets of which the wearer rams both hands when they are not required for golfing purposes; then, as a fitting climax, a pair of thick, clumsily made boots. It is needless to add that the attitudes and manners are quite as 'mannish' as the clothes.

Now, as no picture of this kind can be thoroughly appreciated without its antithesis, let me draw another.

A neat sailor hat, surmounting a head 'beautifully coiffeured,' every hair of which is in its place at the end of the round. A smart tight-fitting red coat, a spotless linen collar and tie, an ordinary tailor-made skirt, and a pair of well-made walking boots with nails in the soles.

In Scotland such unattractive costumes as I have tried to describe are seldom seen; ladies appearing in them are looked upon with covert ridicule, and it is openly hinted that they are endeavouring to show by their clothes what cannot be detected in their play. Golf is by this time as much a woman's game as a man's, and ladies can and do look perfectly graceful when playing the game as it ought to be played. Let us all, then, take pride in raising golf as a game of our own, rather than in depreciating it and ourselves, by making it appear as if we were merely imitating man.

E. M. Boys.

NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

MR. ROBERT H. LYTTELTON writes to ask me to correct a couple of slips which he made in a recent paper which he kindly wrote for me. He says: 'In my article on University cricket last month I should have stated that it was in 1868 that R. T. Reid was absent in the second innings of Oxford, while Dr. Ryle was absent in 1836; and in the following year, 1837, Oxford began and finished the match with only ten men.' Mr. Lyttelton's argument was that a few years ago nothing like the interest was felt in cricket that now attaches to the great game, and the point was duly explained; but it is always well to be accurate. Truly, at the present time a University match with ten men on one side is simply inconceivable.

A Scotsman—I believe that, though the reason I do not understand, etiquette demands that one should say 'Scotsman' and not 'Scotchman'—has sent me some remarks on cricket north of the Tweed. Mr. E. M. Johnstone, to mention his name, admits that the Scot has added little or nothing to the cricketing glory of the Empire; but they do play cricket in Scotland, and there seems to be a special Scottish terminology for the game. 'As regards the language of cricket,' he says, 'some of us are happy, expressive, and original to a degree; and the bald English terms when brought North acquire a beauty and a picturesqueness which they never knew before. Be it understood that the writer speaks of technical terms, and not of those hasty, varied, and striking utterances, usually of an interjectional form, which cricket, in common with all branches of sport, gives rise to. The stranger, on entering the Scotch cricket field, will perhaps hear that A is "in the bat," whilst B is "on the bowling." Now in England he would merely be informed that they were "batting" or "bowling," as the case might be; and he will scarcely fail to notice how the Northern terms gain by comparison with those in use in the land of the Saxon. "In the bat!" Does not this at once convey to the mind an idea of one so thoroughly at home that he is, as it were, an inseparable part of the willow he wields?

And even if the phrase indicates an understanding between man and implement, which (in Scotland) is possible rather than actual, there is this to be said, that it shows a worthy standard to be aimed at. And then a man who is "on the bowling" is clearly several cuts above one who is simply "bowling" and nothing more. Perfect control of the ball is implied, and there is a subtle suggestion of the bowler accompanying the leather in its flight—in spirit, of course.

'"Wha's wickets the day?" someone in the crowd asks, but the visitor should not be alarmed; he need only look at the pitch to satisfy himself that wooden, and not human, articles are commonly employed. "Wickets," in fact, is the wicket-keeper. The name tells him plainly how closely he is expected to identify himself with his charges, and how he must take his share of the rough treatment they now and then receive from the ball. Some say that this theory accounts for the fact that no sympathy is shown by the onlookers for the gentleman in question when he meets with an accident in the discharge of his duties. Since he is "wickets," it is argued, it is unreasonable of him to feel pain. In England the player is shamefully misled by the flattering title of "wicket-keeper," and does not awake to the fact that he is, after all, only "wickets," until he receives a fast ball on some unprotected part of his person. So that really the title beautifully illustrates the humanity of the Scot, and his anxiety to avoid causing needless suffering. When a pretty boundary is scored, your Sassenach calls out "Well hit!" Now that is all very good, but there is a certain suggestion of brute force about the word "hit" which jars on the Northerner. Accordingly, he prefers to say "well taken," an expression at once delicate and poetical.' The English 'scorer,' again, is the Scottish 'marker,' who records the performance of him who is 'in the bat' or 'on the bowling.'

It remains a standing puzzle why in some seasons horses are exceptionally bad and in others exceptionally good; for the same care and discrimination are invariably used in the breeding and rearing of blood stock, and there is nothing to account for the wide variations in merit. So many thoroughbred horses are born annually that it would seem reasonable to expect to find a few every season of much about the same capacity; but this is far from being the case. A good many two-year-olds are trained every

year, found to be worthless, and never run; others are, from some cause or other—accident, illness, or what not—prevented from appearing in public; but 1,358 animals of this age took part last year in various races, and they all seem far under the average. I suppose there were close on half a dozen horses in 1886 that would have given Jeddah, the winner of the Derby, from 21 lb. to 2 st. and beaten him easily; but why there should be good years and bad years when the horses running are the offspring of the same parents, and everything seems to tend to something like uniformity, no one has ever been able to suggest.

My own idea is that the three-year-olds were far from exceptionally good last season, and that Galtee More is very well sold—from the seller's point of view. It now appears that Velasquez has been ailing for more than a year; and the reputation of Galtee More depends almost entirely on the fact of his having beaten that colt. Excuses are so often put forward when horses are defeated, and in so many cases remain entirely lacking confirmation, that the judicious owner possesses his soul in patience and says nothing. Lord Rosebery saw his colt run wretchedly in the Two Thousand Guineas last year and not much better in the Derby; but he was silent. Nothing like an excuse was suggested; and as Velasquez won the Princess of Wales's Stakes at the Newmarket July Meeting and the Champion Stakes at the Second October, it was assumed that he must be himself. Lord Rosebery has since told his friends that the son of Donovan and Vista had been 'all to pieces,' and though he began to pick up last summer he is only now really at his best again. I always appear to have to write at inconvenient moments, and the Princess of Wales's Stakes will be run for a day or two before this number of the Magazine is published; but if all goes well with Velasquez, I shall be greatly surprised if he has not cantered home for that race, and if he does not show himself in a brilliant light before flat racing ends.

No one who has not been closely connected with and deeply interested in a stable of horses can realise in how many ways they go wrong and what a multiplicity of disappointments arise. The good-looking colt whose easy action has been so cordially admired is tried, and sprawls hopelessly before he has gone quite half a mile; or else he wins his trial, goes curiously short in his canter next day and develops a leg. The filly whose likeness in

make, shape, and movement to 'the old mare'—some invincible heroine of the past—has delighted her friends, 'blows' oddly at exercise, and, after hoping against hope for a time, her owner can no longer evade recognition of the fact that she 'makes a noise.' A horse has 'the best legs in Newmarket;' grows big and muscular on his work; is never sick or sorry; canters to the post, carrying the supreme confidence of his friends, in a style that evokes the enthusiastic admiration of all beholders; is going at the distance as well as his adherents have hoped and expected to see him—it looked a certainty and it obviously is—when suddenly his ears go back, his jockey raises his whip and uses it, but there is no response: the sound, speedy horse that could if he would is an arrant rogue, and can neither be forced nor persuaded to make an effort. The cheery congratulations are no doubt very pleasant to an owner after a success, but it is gloomy business for him to return to the enclosure after a defeat and receive the condolences of friends who are 'Very sorry—thought you were sure to win!' or of less sympathetic acquaintances who rather savagely or scornfully remark that 'The horse ran a perfect brute! I thought, from what you told me, that he could not be beaten!'

A personage all of us who have any acquaintance with the Turf meet continually is 'the unluckiest creature that ever went on to a racecourse.' He abounds. You never go racing without coming across him and hearing his tale of woe. Didn't the So-and-so colt look a certainty, and it couldn't have been beaten, either, if *he* hadn't been on! Now he has a dash on the Disaster filly, but she won't win, you'll see, because he *has* backed her. You turn from him with a casual reply of mild commiseration, and there is another of him, with a precisely similar recital. The number of seconds he has backed is simply incredible. There never was such an unlucky beggar as he is! If several things had not happened that did happen, and a few other things had taken place that omitted to occur, he would have won a fortune. Now he is going to back Vain Hope, but it will be beaten, because he is on! Did you hear what he did last week? He was told by a man in the stable, &c. &c. &c. I shall find him at Ascot—I write just before that meeting—and he will be at Goodwood and Doncaster and Newmarket for the 'back-end meetings,' and if I chance to go to Monte Carlo in the winter he will be there, eager to tell me that he was just going to have a plaque on 5, when he altered his mind, went for 11, and 5 came up of course! It is always the same with him, but he goes on doing it and bewailing.

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AN AMATEUR'S HONEYMOON ON A FORTY-TONNER

BY BARBARA HUGHES

HAVING been for several cruises, and often attended the Cowes Regatta on friends' yachts, it had long been my ambition to have one of my own. My future bride being of the same opinion, we mutually agreed that nothing would be so delightful as to spend our honeymoon on a 30- or 40-tonner. It was with this intent that I repaired to M.'s yard up the Medina in search of a suitable vessel.

I determined to take no one's advice or opinion, but to choose her entirely myself, as I was sure I knew my own and Mary's requirements best, and was quite yachtsman enough to make a good bargain. Certainly there was no lack of choice! A bulky 40-tonner then caught my eye. 'Just the right size,' and lo and behold! her name was 'Mary.' Being in more or less an idiotic frame of mind at the time with regard to that magic name, I blush now to say that that decided me. I forthwith clinched the bargain, and wrote the needful cheque. 'Here's my chance,' thought the knowing builder; 'we don't get gents like this here every day. He's a young one, he is; he can wait!'

Fool that I was, to pay my money over unconditionally like that, as I found after, to my cost. Two days before the wedding I repaired to Cowes with a load of treasures, such as pictures, china, flowers, &c., all ready to put up and arrange prior to my wife's arrival.

What was my horror to find the 'Mary' still up high and dry, a couple of plumbers indolently conversing below, and the spars and decks not touched! Despair and rage possessed me, and I gave Mr. M. and his foreman such an exhibition of my evil nature as I had never favoured mortal man with before. What would Mary think of her future prospects in life if this was all the preparation I had made for her on her wedding-day? Where should we go? What should we do? We intended to come straight down from town, and find the 'Mary' lying waiting in the best berth in the Roads, everything spick and span, the envy of all beholders.

I fairly 'flew round' the yard, not sparing my language or my audience. The latter, however, took my protestations with the utmost stoicism and calmness; no doubt such displays were nothing unusual in their shipyard; they were well accustomed to seeing the human animal's behaviour under like circumstances.

All they did was to very civilly offer me their commiserations, and point to the numerous 100-ton cutters, and 1,000-ton steamers, all expected by their owners to be ready on the same day as my humble 'forty.' So the end of it was, I had to take my wife to some back rooms in a wretched hotel, all the best having been previously engaged. Such is life! So are our hopes thwarted and our best endeavours levelled to the ground!

Was it tiresome in my wife, or was it not, that she seemed rather relieved than otherwise at the upsetting of my dearest plans? She found great consolation in repeating, 'But, dear George, how sick we should have been!' If it had been in these days I should have replied tartly, 'Speak for yourself, my dear!' but then I was a newly married man, so gently rejoined, 'How *can* you say such a thing, darling?'

It certainly was a horribly rough Cowes week. I have never seen a worse. A kind friend lent us his ½-rater to go for a sail in one evening, when it was blowing fresh, with the usual furious ebb-tide running. He told me she was 'a rum-un' to steer; 'but, of course, it is superfluous to tell you anything about yachting,' he added, with becoming civility. I regret to say his confidence was in this case a little premature. That ½-rater was undoubtedly possessed! Not a proper boat at all to entrust to a man in charge of his young and lovely bride. I think my friend will be more discreet in future, however, as after charging two or three stationary vessels point-blank, flattening our stem, springing the mast, and smashing the tiller, we returned the 'Matchbox' to her indignant owner in but a sorry plight. 'Match-*wood*

VERY CIVILLY OFFERED ME THEIR COMMISERATIONS

would more aptly describe her,' as some wit remarked; she was re-christened so from that day, and my disgust at it only served to perpetuate the memory of my sorry adventure.

To a man of my parts and abilities stopping ashore a whole Cowes week was unendurable. Every morning with the dawn I appeared at the yard and stood sentry over the 'Mary.' An African slave-driver would have been a kind master in comparison with me during those steaming August days. 'At all costs,' I said, 'she must be ready to go down to the Westward for the regatta.'

'Oh, yes, sir,' was the answer, 'we can manage that; but she won't be quite as well finished as we should have wished; there are a few little things, sir, such as——'

'Oh, blow the little things!' I incautiously returned, 'never mind them.' I repented this afterwards—at leisure.

So, on the 16th, we finally embarked. The following day at 9 A.M. the race from Cowes to Weymouth was to be sailed. We were rather taken aback to find the 'Mary' entered at the bottom of the list, being allowed *hours* by vessels half her size, and this on an open sea-course! It was very galling, especially after the extravagant compliments I had received on my purchase from those same compilers of the handicap.

'Never mind, my dear,' I consoled myself by saying to my wife; 'we will show them we are not quite such fools as we look when we lead the fleet into Weymouth harbour!'

The night of the 16th is stamped on my memory for ever! How cosy the little cabin looked, how hot it smelt! Paraffin, cabbage water, mutton fat, and a hitherto unknown quantity to me—bilge-water—were some of the ingredients which constituted this savoury aroma. The weather was sultry and thundery, a slight swell portended evil for the morrow, the heat was suffocating.

I knock gently at my wife's door to know how she is getting on. No answer; so I determine to go and see for myself. This is easier said than done. The door is not locked, but there is something solid and heavy which obstinately holds its own pressing against it. A frenzy seizes me, and I fling my weight against it, and find the resistance had been caused by the inert form of my unfortunate wife, in a dead faint. The closeness of the cabin, with its corresponding smell of bilge-water, unrelieved by any fresh air (the skylight being firmly stuck), was quite enough to account for any faintness, 'though she might have said so before,' I muttered impatiently. Being a stranger to the

gentle arts of sick-nursing, I dragged my helpless spouse up the companion and emptied bucket upon bucket of salt sea-water over her devoted head! Then I became alarmed, and rushed down to get salts (which, of course, I could not find), and overheard the mate's sympathetic voice saying, 'Pore thing! I guess she's mostly drowned!'

However, my simple method had proved effectual; she came round, though in a very flabby and moist condition. Of course, it ended in my having to do everything—tidy her cabin, dry her hair, and put the saloon in order. This job took me half into the night, while my wife lay patiently inert on the saloon sofa, quietly watching my manœuvres.

Then down came the storm, crashing thunder and blinding lightning, and rain calculated to force its way through the tightest caulking. As the sun had been assiduously 'opening the decks' all day, it was not surprising that a refreshing drip was soon felt, sometimes on my head, sometimes on Mary's. This necessitated further work. I set basins for the drips in sundry places, towels in others, put the best things away, kicked over the basins, wiped them up, upset them again, swore at them, and generally made myself useful and interesting till the storm abated. Meanwhile my wife, tired out and restless, was in a sort of somnambulous mood, between sleeping and waking. She kept up a disjointed little conversation, partly to herself, partly to me.

'Does anybody know where everybody is?' she suddenly exclaimed. This was somewhat of a problem, and I was not in a mood to give her an explanation at that moment, so I curtly requested her to 'ask me another.' So she continued:

'I think the Solent must have turned upside down, and we are underneath, somehow, George. Tell me if we turn quite upside down too, and I will get up on the roof; only do go and hold on to my methylated spirits, and don't let the matches get at it, or they might set it alight! I hope they have not poured the water into my bath under the floor, or we shall be drowned in that! Hardly so romantic, dear,' smiling, and to my relief opening her eyes, and regaining her wandering senses. By this time the worst was over, and having at last got things pretty snug, we both retired to our cabins, and I confess to sleeping soundly, though on a damp mattress.

Tuesday, the 17th, dawned fine and clear—a glorious prospect indeed for our sail down west. At 5 A.M. the crew were about, and no more sleep was possible, especially with my first race in view. All the men were chattering and cracking jokes together;

they seemed mightily pleased to be getting under weigh, and so was I. In fact, the only dissentient voice was my wife's. But as I had been a bachelor for twenty-eight years, and accustomed to please myself, I did not feel inclined to reverse the order of things now! So under weigh we got. What's more, I stood no idleness in others, and Mary was unmercifully worried and badgered until she showed her diminished and still damp head above the companion. She then professed herself much delighted with what she saw. From fifteen to twenty large white mainsails were being hoisted; musical 'Ja-ha-ho!' of the crew resounding pleasantly across the still water. Not a breath of wind, but a delicious freshness was in the air after the storm of last night. Everything on deck was sogged with wet; the ropes, all stiff and shrunk up, would take constant 'setting up,' as they relaxed in the drying sun, to keep the sails flat. My new suit of canvas, needless to say, was not ready, so we had with shame to hoist our tattered rags to the scornful gaze of our dapper competitors. If swigging could have done it, surely our sails had been the best in the fleet! But, woe is me! they had outstretched the spars, and consequently fell in graceful folds, 'more like an old woman's petticoat,' as the skipper aptly remarked. The wind seemed inclined to come from the Sou'-west, dead on end, that is to say, which was not exactly the thing for us under the circumstances.

Jones (the skipper), however, was reassuring.

'Maybe we shall do they by working the shores, as we draw less water and the tide be flowing,' he remarked.

'Quite so, Jones,' I returned, much pleased with his sagacity. 'We've got hold of the right chap this time,' I thought to myself, chuckling.

Now the next thing was to get *out*, all surrounded as we were with vessels, a strong tide running, and no wind. The fashion we adopted reminded me of our old French governess's manner of negotiating a crowd. She would hold her stalwart elbows square to her sides, and turn sharply from one side to the other, adroitly digging her neighbours in the ribs at every turn, and conscientiously apologising at each dig with so much earnestness and effusion as to mollify the most exacting stranger.

I regret to say the 'Mary's' progress was not marked with so much *politesse* as distinguished madame's; but it was quite as successful, and we were on the line—stern foremost withal—at the crash of gunfire.

Why the 'Meteor' should have chosen exactly the same spot

for making her start, and then swearing at us for being in the way, I am at a loss to imagine. Naturally an altercation ensued.

'What be you about?' says someone on the big flyer; 'don't you know your rules? a vessel running should keep clear of a vessel on a wind!'

'I baint running,' returned Jones curtly.

'Then what be you doen?'

'I'm dashed if I know,' says Jones with an oath, first sawing the tiller one way and then the other.

'I guess you're scullin' now, anyways,' jeered the other's voice as the queenly cutter stole away. Our stolid vessel, having got her keel well across the tide, was not to be tempted to face it again, so in despair we 'let go.' Not a very good omen for our first race! Jones foretold the wind would freshen on the ebb, which would make out in an hour or two's time; but it was rather trying lying there right under the Club windows for a couple of hours, while all the rest of the fleet were pushing on merrily down to Weymouth.

Several provoking trippers rowed by and looked us up and down, and on catching sight of our gorgeous and perhaps over-large racing flag, would nudge each other and giggle, or else break into open insult at the fastness of our progress, &c.! If it had not been for my wife clinging valiantly to my coat-tails, I should have jumped over and chastised these merry-makers; perhaps it is just as well I did not, as it would not have been a very dignified proceeding. The steward then revealed a terrible discovery. The tanks had never been filled; there was only a few gallons of water in a couple of breakers on deck!

'That's all right, sir,' says the undefeated Jones; 'we shall be at Weymouth to-night, for sure.'

It did not look much like it, but we cheered up, and went down to breakfast. A little breeze then sprang up, and as the flood was still running, Jones proceeded to 'work the shores' as he had before suggested.

Our first intimation of his tactics was a sudden jar, then a dead stop. It gave such a jerk that I capsized my tea into the bacon dish, the bacon dish into my lap, and thence on to the floor. I then flung myself up the companion with the double purpose of giving free vent to my rage, and seeing what was the matter; while my wife applied herself to saving what she could of our shattered meal. She also shed some tears over the departed beauty of the French brocade and Wilton pile, which had

I DRAGGED MY HELPLESS SPOUSE UP THE COMPANION

lost their youth and freshness in one fell swoop of sticky tea and greasy bacon!

So we were on the rocks!

'There ain't no accountin' for them things, sir,' grumbled Jones, 'they shifties.'

Now I may be a fool, but I am not such a fool as to believe that, and I told Jones so, pretty straight. He had to confess himself in the wrong for once, but he soon perked up again.

'*Now* she goes, mates!' he kept saying, as he rushed from stem to stern, now clawing the jib to windward, now easing the peak, then flying back again to the tiller as if the vessel was going at least forty knots.

At last he tired of this game, and sat down, despairing, on the bulwark. At that moment came a big wave from a German 'Lloyd,' and, lifting the 'Mary' right off the rocks, let her slip off again into deep water.

'There! did not I tell you so?' triumphantly exclaimed Jones, jumping up and going at his work again with redoubled energy.

'We'd better quit workin' them shores, I'm thinkin', sir, and try our luck well out this time. What say you, sir?' said the mate, with a slight twinkle in his eye.

'Yes,' I answered; 'we might knock a hole in her next time under the skipper's famous pilotage.'

Jones winced, and quickly remarked the tide 'weren't done much now, nowheres, so we'd best cut right across; she was a better vessel at long legs than short ones, he reckoned.' So we put her on the port tack, and had a graceful sail across.

It was a heavenly day, I must say. Bright sun, warm wind, smooth sea, and no one in sight to bother us. I came to the conclusion it was a great pity to be in a hurry about sailing, when it was so pleasant and peaceful, surely it was none the worse for being a little protracted!

My wife found St. Albans race a little upsetting. She was lying down on the sofa in her cabin, when, without warning, she received the whole contents of her hat-box, which was 'put out of the way' on the upper nettings, smack into her lap. The weight of the box, too, was considerable, and she was then speedily rolled off the sofa on to the floor, where she and hat-box, hats, bottles, and all the things off the dressing-table were soon exchanging blows and making havoc together. The clatter they made was heard above the roaring of the race, and I rushed down, and extricated my unfortunate wife from her woful plight.

Of course it was my fault for not telling her, but I had been so interested watching the extraordinary action of the water and the stresses of a small boat which was simply being turned inside out and round about in the most alarming manner, that I clean forgot to think of my wife and crockery below. Jones said he had seldom seen the race so bad. It curled over and flopped down on our decks in the most unaccountable manner. We had to shut down everything, and got our decks pretty well full of water before we got through into the smooth on the other side. The drips in the saloon again made their appearance, and the steward and Mary between them concocted all kinds of devices to outwit the cunning leaks; all efforts to divert them, however, proved equally useless.

Just before tea the steward appeared on deck with a dish of muffins, and in his aggravatingly meek voice asked whether he should 'eat them.' Whereupon my wife indignantly replied, 'No, certainly not! They are for our own tea.' The poor creature, greatly terrified at the sternness of my wife's manner, looked piteously round for help. So I came to the rescue, and told him most certainly to *heat* them with all speed, and not to spare the butter.

This good man, 'Mealings' as he was significantly called, was a source of mingled annoyance and amusement to us; many a time since have we shrieked with laughter over the misunderstandings that his thin, whiny voice and original accent caused.

On the evening of the 17th it fell calm, and we lay flopping about in mid-channel for the rest of the night. It was very dark and somewhat thick, and I could not sleep a bit, so with the dawn was up on deck to find out where we had got to. A nice little north-west wind had sprung up, and we were skimming along fairly close hauled, with the land still a mere grey shadow on the horizon. I venture to ask Light, the mate, who was steering, whether that was Portland we saw in the distance. He was a sinister creature, this mate, whom I own to holding somewhat in awe. On this occasion he was very forbidding in aspect, and did not deign so much as to move his head to reply that 'It might be, and it might not. He was on his course, and that was all *his* business.'

'Insolent brute!' I thought to myself, but dared not say so, and seeing that my presence was not coveted on deck, I returned to my bunk, and had a rare good snooze.

About nine o'clock I was awakened by a clumsy knocking at my door. This was followed by Jones, but a very humble and

browbeaten-looking Jones, quite different from the self-assured and boastful man of before. After stuttering and fidgetting for some time, he clutched his cap off and scratched his head, and began, 'Please, sir, I can't tell you how it happened, and it shall never happen again, sir, while I am with you, nor ever after; but the fact is, sir, as I was not feeling quite well last night, so I thought it best to turn in like, and let the mate take her down along. Now, sir, he's lost his bearings, and don't know where he is, and no more do I, and havin' no chart, 'tis difficult to say, but it appears to me as we're past Portland some way, and maybe Torquay would be our nearest port.'

Here was a fine sagacious three-guinea-a-week skipper for you!

I had better pass over the scene which ensued, and content myself with saying that we were eventually fetched up at Torquay about midday, and took up the best berth previous to the arrival of the Weymouth contingent.

I confess to having had to lie unsparingly when I was stormed with questions as to my non-appearance at Weymouth. My wife, however, said I did it very well; in fact, it sounded 'quite natural,' which was supposed to be consoling, though not, perhaps, quite complimentary!

Our scanty water supply had caused us great discomfort, none of our running-gear was in anything like order, so we had to forego the topsail, not to say the spinaker, which made itself conspicuous by its absence. The decks perseveringly leaked the whole time, the bilge was constantly in evidence, never having been cleaned out at all, as we subsequently found out, and all our bath-water and soapsuds emptied straight into it.

These are some of the trials of inexperience, and we must all go through them, in a measure, as we were not intended to learn by anything else. We can only hope that others will appreciate the funny side of these little *contretemps* as much as we did, and, like us, will order another and bigger yacht for next year.

THE BADGER AND HOW TO TAKE HIM

BY A. E. PEASE, M.P.

I do not know of the existence of any monograph on the Badger, ancient or modern, in English or any other language. Nor have I been able to find any adequate description in any work on natural history or British fauna of this the largest, and by no means the least interesting, of the real wild animals that still exist in England and Wales.

To understand and appreciate all sides of the badger's character you must see him in war as well as at peace; and such knowledge has to be purchased by great labour and bodily fatigue. In the name of sport, as in the name of liberty, great crimes are often committed. There are those who look upon hunting of all sorts as cruel and degrading, and cannot understand the pleasures of a chase involving the distress of pursuit or pain to any animal. I have a certain sympathy for such sentiments, and yet, paradoxical as it may appear, my very love of animals increases my passion for hunting them. Besides the longing to come to close quarters with them, the desire to possess or to handle them, there is the natural ambition to be even with them. There is an unwritten code of honour in the field which, if followed, makes the struggle of wits and strength, of skill and endurance, a fair one, and one in which alone many a valuable lesson out of Nature's book can be taught. To relieve any tender consciences amongst my readers I may here declare, without wishing to reflect on brother sportsmen whose methods are more Cromwellian, that when victorious in the war with a badger, when, after many a hard-fought battle in his subterranean fortress—when mine and countermine, tunnel, shaft, and trench have driven him fighting to his last stand in his deepest and innermost citadel, and he has been forced to capitulate—I have never abandoned him to a victorious soldiery howling for blood, but have always given him

honourable terms. I have never willingly or wantonly killed a badger; he has invariably become a pampered prisoner, or been transported to some new home, where some one whom I had interested in his species was prepared to give him protection, and a new start in life. Among those who have given my badgers protection I may name Mr. Edward North Buxton, who has done so much to maintain the natural beauty of Epping Forest, and to protect wild life within its borders. I know of several thriving colonies of badgers within the forest precincts descended from my prisoners of war.

THE BADGER

The badger has made a wonderful struggle for existence, and may linger on for many years yet in the more secluded corners of England and Wales (in Scotland he is almost extinct), but he owes all to his own mysterious silent ways, and nothing to man's mercy in the matter. The intelligent and unprejudiced wearers of velveteen, who, with the tacit consent of their masters, have, by means of the steel-trap, flag-trap, and gun, exterminated and banished for ever the most interesting of our animals and the most beautiful of our birds, have hitherto failed—as far as the

badger is concerned—in their ruthless attempt to rid earth and heaven of everything but furred and feathered game. In many English counties, however, the badger has given in before ceaseless digging, snaring, and shooting, and the silent covert where he had his earth, where he dug and delved and made his wonderful subterranean stronghold, knows him no more. He has gone with the polecat, the pine marten, the wild cat, the harriers, the buzzards, and a host of the brightest and loveliest of our birds. Guiltless of the crimes of his fellow-victims against game, he was and is still ignorantly classed under that all-embracing word of the keeper, 'vermin.'

About few animals has there been more nonsense written in regard to his habits and anatomy, and for many of the popular notions concerning him there is no foundation whatever.

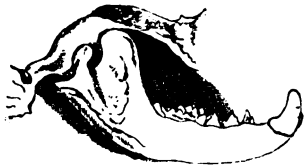
The head of the badger is wedge-shaped in general conformation, the back of the head large, the cheek-bones well sprung, and the muzzle fine and long. The nose or snout is black in colour, long and full; the eyes, small, black or black blue; and the ears small, round, close-set, and neat. The strength of a badger's legs is most remarkable, and for the size of an animal that weighs from 19 lbs. to 35 lbs. he possesses a most wonderful combination of bone and muscle. The legs are very short and the joints large; the feet, like the legs, are nearly black, and are large and long.

The badger is cut out for a miner. His wedge-shaped head is capable of forcing a passage through sand and soft strata, whilst his armour-tipped diggers are worked by machinery that rivals in power the steam navvy; and whilst his fore-feet are going like an engine, throwing stones, bits of rock, sand, clay, and all that he comes in contact with between his fore-legs (which are set wide apart, leaving plenty of room under the chest), his powerful hams are working his hind-legs and feet like little demons, throwing back all that the fore-feet throw under his belly. And this is not all. His powerful jaw and teeth will cut, break, and tear all roots that obstruct his passage onwards, and it is most entertaining to see him going through earth, shale, and stone with the rapidity and sustained energy of a machine. No one would credit, who has not seen it, what one of these animals can do. I have often been defeated by their being able to penetrate quicker than even a gang of men with pick-axe, spade, shovel, and crowbar could follow. They are also covered with a thick, long-haired coat, which, with a loose skin of extraordinary density and toughness, forms a complete and effective armour.

There is much similarity in the general conformation of the

badger's and bear's skull, but the protecting ridge on the head is absent in the bear. What gives to the badger's jaw its proverbial and terrific force? To witness its work is to know that its power of biting, crushing, and holding must be the result of some peculiarly strong mechanical as well as muscular construction. The examination of the skull helps in the solution of the mystery. The conformation of the jaw is strong, and the muscles attached to it powerful; but besides this he has two distinguishing structural additions that give his jaws, furnished with his formidable teeth, the strength and retentive power of an iron vice. The first is that his lower jaws are locked into sockets in the skull, and are thereby made—unlike those of all other animals I know —impossible of dislocation.

The second peculiarity arises from a high ridge of bone, standing straight up and running from the base of the skull to between the ears, giving a firm hold to the ligaments and tendons, and an additional leverage and length, which are again rendered



LOWER JAW OF BADGER

DOVE-TAILED JAWS

more effective by passing over the high cheek-bones as over a pulley before reaching the jaws.

A badger's earth or warren is properly and generally called a 'set' or 'cete.' It varies in respect of size, number of entrances, depth of galleries, and choice of site, almost as much as rabbit holes. Such a 'set,' if long established, will penetrate through earth, clay, and sub-soil, to some stratum of shale, or sand, or loose rock. Some of the galleries and chambers will be at a great distance from the surface, and some at an enormous depth.

In Cornwall I once tried my hand, with my brother, some strong Cornishmen, and a team of terriers, at a very innocent-looking badger 'set' situated in a level field. There were but three holes, and these not very far apart. The farmer told us that there had been badgers there all his life, and no one had ever been able to dig one out. This rather stimulated us than otherwise, and we had in the course of a few hours a trench dug some six feet deep, and were nearing the sounds of the subterranean conflict, which had been sustained by the terriers, when suddenly

we found that we were above the sound, and we sank a shaft down three feet from the bottom of our trench, to find galleries and chambers in all directions. The battle had by this time moved, and we were in despair at the prospect of following on the level with a depth of nine feet of surface soil to be lifted in every direction we turned. I was listening at the bottom of the trench, having penetrated to the third story of this underground barrack, when I distinctly heard the 'bump-bump' of the badger below me. My companions came down and listened too, and there was not the slightest doubt that there was a fourth story and labyrinth of passages some three or four feet below us, and, for anything we knew, another beyond. The day was far spent, the task was impossible, and the rest of our time was devoted to getting the terriers out, and making as good a retreat as we could before the victorious enemy.

SKULL OF BADGER, FRONT VIEW

SKULL, SIDE VIEW

I should think this 'set' was hundreds of years old: some of the passages, the farmer told us, were a hundred yards long! As a rule a badger's hole descends rapidly at first, and then may branch into any number of by-ways and subterranean galleries. Whichever route you follow, however, you invariably come to a chamber or 'oven,' which is generally a sort of vaulted hall, where four ways meet, and which is, or has been, the living room of the family at some previous time.

The badger is easily domesticated if brought up by hand, and proves an interesting and charming companion. I had at one time two that I could do anything with, and which followed me so closely that they would bump against my boots each step I took, and come and snuggle in under my coat when I sat down. I was very much attached to them, but, having to leave for the

London season, I came home after a prolonged absence to find that they had reverted to their natural disposition, and had forgotten him who had been a foster-parent to them. As I could not fondle them without a pair of hedging-gloves on, and they no longer walked at my heel, I made them a home in the woods, where the thought of their happiness has helped me to bear my loss.

In their wild state their food is principally roots and insects —they are especially fond of beetles and such creatures as are to be found just below the surface of the ground.

They are carnivorous, and eat mice, rats, voles, and moles. They will take a rabbit out of a trap, turn it inside out, and eat all the meat, leaving the skin behind, turned neatly with the fur inside. They are also fond of very young rabbits, and will dig a shaft through several feet of solid earth direct on to the nest. But when this has been stated, nearly all has been said with regard to their propensity to damage in game coverts.

The badger has a special weakness for wild honey, and the grubs of wasps and humble bees. The wildest and most unconciliatory badgers I have ever had in confinement would come out and eat a wasp's nest, and they will hunt every bank and hedgerow in July and August, routing out every wasp's and hornet's nest in the countryside.

In my opinion there are two legitimate methods of hunting the badger. First, that of a straightforward attack on his fortress; and should it be an old-established earth, it may be the end of the longest day will not see the battle ended.

Thus you may be left with a tired and wounded pack of terriers, exhausted sappers, and the badger having blocked and barricaded his retreat with soil, stones, and sand, is lost. The other method depends on taking the badger off his guard, and is more in the character of an ambuscade under cover of night. When the badgers are away from home you block up their earths, placing sacks with running nooses in the mouth, in the most frequented holes. Station one of your party near the 'set,' and either take a small pack of hounds and draw the country for a few miles round, and hunt him like a fox, getting a run across country and a fine cry; or you may beat the neighbouring coverts with men and dogs of any description that are trained to hunt badger.

The badger thus pursued makes straight for home, blunders headlong into the hole, only to find that his efforts to get in are closing the mouth of the sack, that retreat or fighting is alike in

vain, and that he is an imprisoned bagman, without having struck a blow in self-defence. It is not uncommon for a badger thus pursued to stand at bay, when a good dog may keep him in play, or hold on, till you come up and secure him. No doubt there is amusement and excitement in this moonlight chase, and to some it is preferable to the arduous labour with pick, spade, axe, and terrier.

To my mind, however, there is something more interesting and exciting in the long sustained conflict and labour of the former, for which you require perseverance, wit, patience and courage on the part of man and terrier. The courage and endurance that a good terrier will display when need requires before such a foe will fill his owner's heart with joy and pride. Picture what it means for a small terrier to enter into the bowels of the earth to find, to cope with, and for long hours in dust and darkness in the tortuous maze to keep up an unequal fight with an enormously superior foe, whose grunts and clattering teeth add terror to his charges down the echoing ways. Yet I have had not a few that, hour after hour, on their backs or their sides, would lie up to a badger, keeping him cornered, and continuously give tongue, with no voice to direct them. Should the badger charge, such a terrier would rather die than let him leave the corner to which he has been driven, and will return fighting and facing his huge opponent, driving him inch by inch into the *cul de sac*, caring neither for bite nor wounds, and making noise enough to let you know where the battle rages. It is no part of his duty to tackle the badger. A good terrier knows this, and will only resort to his teeth should the badger attempt to force a passage. If it comes to close quarters, such a terrier will draw back his forelegs under his body, take the attack full in the face, and trust to seizing the badger by the neck. A badger when attacked generally bites upwards—*i.e.* he lowers his head and turns the back of his head downwards. Nothing made my heart beat faster than, with head to the earth, to hear the din of this subterranean warfare carried along the dark galleries to the day. You have sent in one of your best terriers; he has tried by cajolery and caresses, by cries, by straining at his chain, to be allowed the honourable distinction of first blood. You have dispatched him with your blessing, and he has quickly and silently started on his journey into the unknown. You listen to him forcing his passage, drawing himself round corners, scratching away some accumulation or fall from the roof, and hear his eager panting as he winds his foe. Presently you hear

a low sharp bark, then another, then two or three more, next a bumping, thumping noise; it is the badger, who has waited to see who the intruder is, and, rousing himself, is retreating. The terrier barks no more, but you can hear the thump-thump of the badger, followed by the efforts of the dog to keep up with him. They are now a long way in, and you can plainly hear the bark again. Soon the contest begins, and the terrier's cry comes to your ear with regularity and clearness; but the badger is only disputing the way—he has not yet been driven with his back against the wall. The terrier redoubles his activity; you can hear him feinting at the badger, sharp give-and-take, but no foolish attempt to lay hold. After ten minutes, the badger again retreats, probably up the hill, and you have to listen on the surface or at the highest holes of the set till you can hear them again. At last you catch a faint sound—they are still moving, now stationary, now further on; then they seem to stay in one place. There is the steady yap-yap-yap of the dog just distinguishable to the ear.

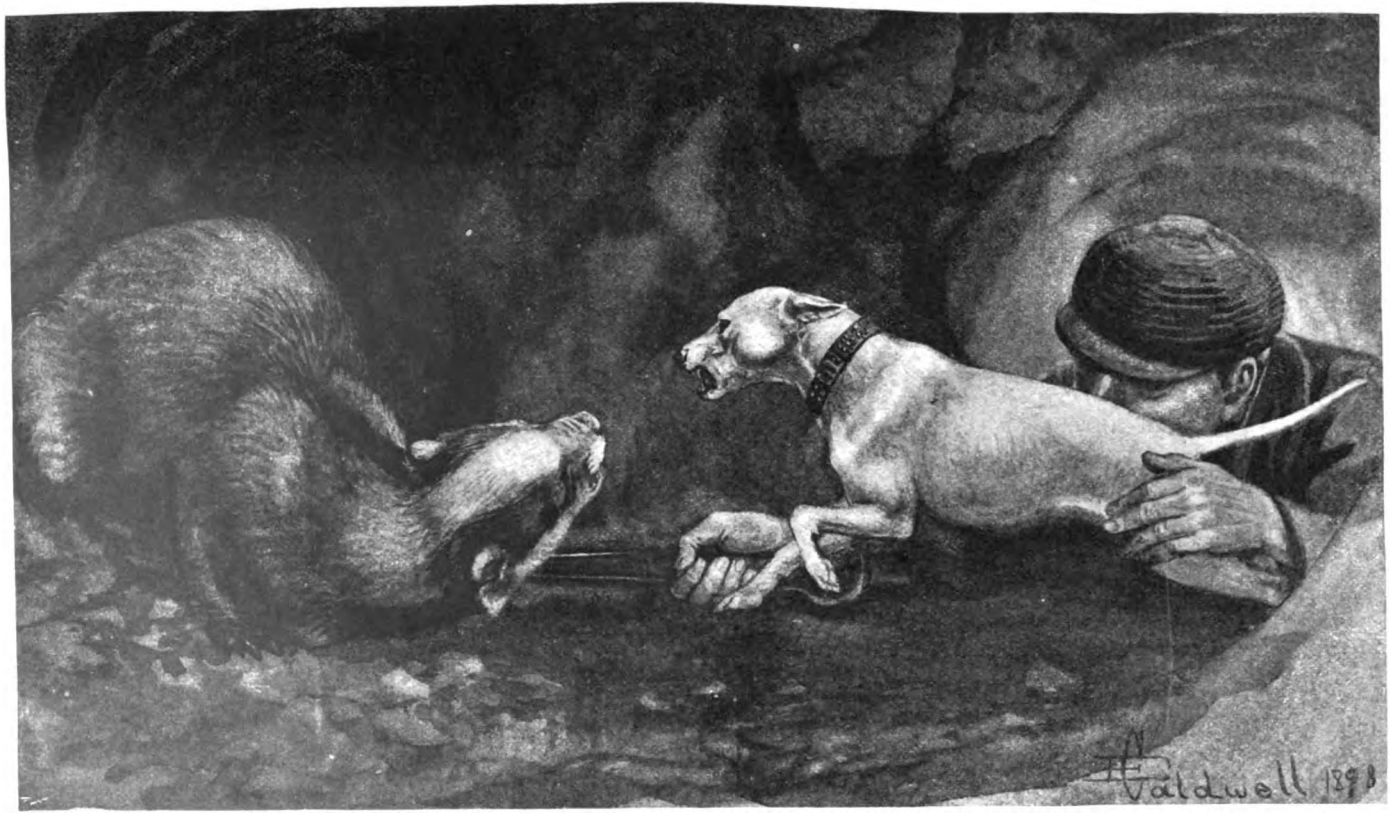
Quick, every hand to work! A trench six feet deep, or deeper if necessary, must be cut across the set to cut off the badger from the passages. With pick, spade, and shovel the work goes on, while some one listens to know whether the scene of battle moves. If it does, the badger may have found a side gallery, and gone far enough, or he may have charged the dog. He may have passed by a different road beneath your feet in the trench; but if the terrier has succeeded in keeping him face to face and engaged, yet not driving him so hard as to make him charge, you may be successful in an hour or two, and find that your cutting intersects the passage in which the badger and the terrier are engaged. If the badger suspects you are cutting off his only means of escape he will charge and fight, and the terrier will sometimes be unable to back fast enough; then there will be a meeting of teeth and jaws. The dog's smothered cries of anger and pain make you strain every nerve to get to his relief.

When the badger at last leaves go, the terrier's turn comes, and now, with blood up, he drives back the badger to his end of the hole, with every determination to keep him there. After two or three turns like this, if the dog has been in an hour or two, he will probably come out for a breath of air for a moment. He should be immediately taken, fastened up, watered, and kept in reserve for future contingencies, and the best terrier for sticking up be sent in with the utmost haste. If a minute has been spent in doing this, every moment will have been used by the

badger in barricading the passage against the dog and burying himself. This once accomplished, you may as well whistle for your badger as continue digging, for he may have got down into some other gallery, or have buried himself so that neither dog nor man can find him. Of one thing you may be sure, that whilst you are speculating what has become of him, he is digging at a prodigious rate, or has already made his escape by some secret stair.

If, however, you are quick, terrier number two has interrupted master badger as he is at work, and lets you know. 'It's all right,' 'Come on,' 'He's here,' 'I've got him,' 'He's got me,' 'You beast,' 'Get back,' 'I'll hold him,' and spade and shovel and pick are hard at work again. Backs and arms are aching with lifting at high pressure out of the deep trench. You dig on, blocking the hole as the roof falls in, but every now and then the shovels clear it for a moment to give the dog air. And now the game has shown itself. A terrible charge down the hole sends out the terrier; and the badger, seeing the men at work, backs again, followed by the dog. Now all is excitement. Every snap, hunch, grunt, groan and yell in the fight is heard. A favourite's life in the balance! The prize in view! The other terriers are tugging at their chains, frantic to join the fray. It is maddening for them to see the dust and commotion in the trench, to hear the sound of battle so near, to wind the enemy, to hear the cry of their fighting and perhaps wounded companion, and not to be allowed to share in the glory of the final action. Now is the time if you have a terrier to enter to see what he is made of, but there is no time to waste on education. You are close up to the badger; he cannot be an arm's length off. Draw your dog; the badger will then turn his tail to you to dig, or he will charge out. Be ready with the tongs and a good dog in case he charges. But if he turns tail get hold of it with a good grip. A long pull and a steady pull will draw him out, bouncing, lunging, and snapping. Now, boys, ready with the sack! Dogs off! All want steady nerves now; three hands on the sack mouth to keep it open, and take care of your fingers! A twirl round and a quick plunge, and the badger is in the bag. Don't let go his tail till you have slipped the cord on his hind-leg, and made the other end of the cord fast to the bag mouth and to a tree. I have seen a badger go through a sack like a bullet through paper, and it is well to make all as safe as possible.

But let not ingenuous youth think that to enjoy the sport all he has to do is to take a spade and any reputable terrier. He



'HAUL AWAY'

might as well try, like Dame Partington, to stop the rising tide with a mop! Before so serious an enterprise as a badger digging be undertaken, the wise man will see to it that all the materials are ready, and let him be sure that he has the first necessity—the stout heart to go through with a tough job when once started. I have, with my brother, Mr. J. A. Pease, started at 7.30 A.M. from home, worked a summer's day with a slight refreshment at one, handled pick and shovel and spade, fought the terriers, and gone on through the afternoon, evening, and a black wet night, without even a drop of water to slake our parched throats, deserted by all but one faithful workman, and on till the grey dawn of another day, which found us as weary, wet, and wounded, and as disreputable a looking company of three men and four terriers as ever survived a bloody action. At five o'clock we secured a splendid pair of badgers, which we bore home on aching backs, followed by our gallant little team of draggled and dirty terriers. On another occasion, it took my brother and myself, some ten labourers and keepers and nine terriers, from 10 till 5.30, to take an old 30-lb. dog badger, in an earth which had only one hole, and where it was a case of following straight into the hill. It is wonderful what can be done by twelve men with pick, spade, and shovel in seven hours. On this occasion we dug a trench ten feet long into the hill, and then the depth of bearing necessitated our making a drift, or tunnel, which we drove in thirty feet. The heat and want of air inside made the work difficult. Candles would not burn after we had gone about twenty feet, and the tunnel was so low that we had to work on our knees, and then on our stomachs. There was a considerable danger from the roof falling in, but the fight waged so fiercely that we thought of little but what was ahead of us. When at last we got within distance of the badger he was in rocky ground. We could mine no further, and, being on a shelf round a corner, no terrier could draw him. As I was the smallest of the party, it fell to me to try to reach him, and I crawled up as far I could, holding a little bull terrier on whom I could rely for protection for my face, and a pair of short badger tongs. I had indeed a bad quarter of an hour!

It was stifling, cramped, and pitch dark. I kept the terrier in front of my head, and gallantly he behaved, though every now and then the badger's charge, or a fierce encounter, nearly smothered me with dust and soil, against which I could not protect myself, as I was powerless to retreat, there being only room to lie flat on the ground. The man behind me was in the same position, tight

hold of my ankles, and the man again behind him, and the rest of the force made a human chain, which on a signal from me was to be drawn out to daylight. Many attempts I made when the badger charged to get him with the tongs, but I had so little room to work my hands in that I missed him, and heard and felt the click and snack of his teeth on the iron. At last I felt I had hold of something, and I slipped the guard on the tongs, making the hold sure. I cried 'Haul away,' holding the terrier with one hand between me and the badger and the tongs in the other. I found that he came with wonderful ease. It was not till we got to the light that I saw I had the huge bouncing brute by one claw, 'Nip' diverting his attention from my head and hands. The labourers set up a shout, 'He's got him by the clee,' and a minute later we had the satisfaction of bagging him. But we were out only just in time. I had gone back with the terriers to see if there was nothing more in, and hardly had got outside again, when there was a fall from the roof that would, if it had taken place earlier, have buried some of us alive. As it was, I looked round to see if we were all there. The men were, but one little terrier, 'Pepper,' a real treasure belonging to a neighbour of mine in Cleveland, Mr. J. P. Petch, was missing. We went in and found him buried, but got him out alive and little the worse. This was the biggest badger my brother and I ever got.

But these operations are quite surpassed by those M. le Masson related in the following authentic story.

'An extraordinary *chasse*, that lasted without interruption three days and three nights, took place lately in the neighbourhood of St. Omer, on some land in the picturesque commune of Wisques, in a wood attached to the château of Madame la douairière Cauvet de Blanchonval.

'One morning two young sportsmen of St. Omer, MM. Théobald Cauvet and Charles d'Hallewyn, were told by the *garde forestier* that on his beat he knew of several badgers near the place they call l'Ermitage.

'The little dogs being put on the scent soon found the earths, where they entered, and advanced with so much courage that they never stopped till they had reached the bottom of the earth, where they cornered the badgers, which held their ground in an attitude of the most threatening defence.

'The assailants, thus powerless, made themselves heard by barking and baying incessantly, and, with heroic pluck, the little fellows refused to retreat, in spite of the repeated calls of their masters.

'Their perseverance being carried to this length, our young gentlemen formed a resolution worthy of their taste for great undertakings and adventures. Labourers were called from the field and commissioned at once to set to work to reach the badgers.

'The attempt was more than bold. The mouths of the set, three in number, were at the foot of a hill, and embraced between them a sort of triangular piece of land, at the apex of which the passages all united and formed a single underground gallery. The dogs having each entered by a separate hole made this clear.

'A shaft was sunk in order to start a tunnel at the opening of the lowest hole, but a depth of 7 to 8 metres (23 to 26 feet) had to be sunk before the passage was reached; thence they followed the direction taken by the dogs, and enlarged the tunnel to reach them, making an underground roadway 5 feet high (1½ metre) and nearly six feet wide (1¾ metre).

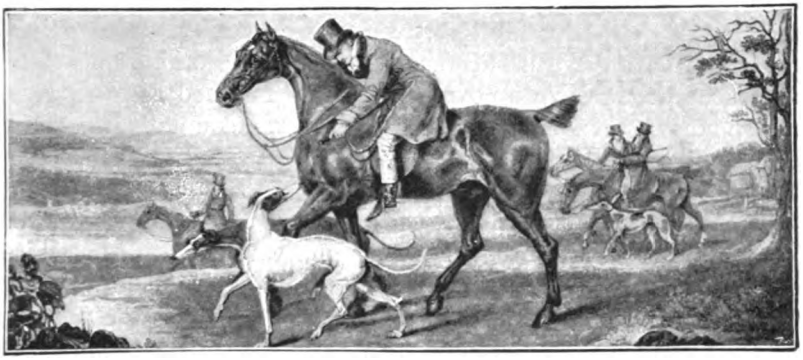
'Whilst the workmen were mining, the badgers on their part were also working ceaselessly, and kept blocking the road with the earth they threw back in front of the men who were pursuing them, whilst the latter worked in shifts (relieving parties). For three days and three nights these indomitable animals worked on, retreating all the time, during which they bored their way 49 feet whilst buried in this extension of their principal earth without air or food.

'At one time during this war *à outrance* it was thought they had escaped by some means or other, but the game terriers, which had hardly left them since the beginning of the struggle, soon reassured the workers by their redoubled cries. The undertaking was pushed on with greater determination than ever, and when the tunnel had reached a length of more than 30 metres (100 feet) they came on three badgers, which were quickly popped into a sack by the keeper. One of them, however, in his struggles succeeded in escaping from the sack, and even tore the clothes of the man who was carrying him. MM. Cauvet and d'Hallewyn showed a persistent perseverance during the whole of this struggle. By day and by night each in turn directed the operations of a siege at which more than one other lover of the pleasures of the chase assisted.'

The terriers I have found the best and surest are amongst the Yorkshire breed of hard, wire-haired fox-terriers, short in the leg and strong-headed. I have seen smooth-coated terriers do equally well, but not often. It is as well to have with you one

bull-terrier, or a fox-terrier with a bit of bull about him. In cases of emergency, and when close up, such a dog comes in useful, but they are tiresome brutes as a rule to do with; they get so excited that they do not care what they go at—it may be the dogs or yourself, or I have seen them set to worry a big stone. They often go to ground well, but have several faults. They *will* tackle the badger, get punished severely, and create all sorts of difficulties, and are generally nearly mute except when fighting.

If by this article I have done anything towards interesting those who care about the perpetuation of a wild and interesting animal that is fast disappearing from our hillsides and valleys, and shown that healthy exercise and pleasure can be obtained in protecting him from extinction, and by fairly entering the lists against him, I shall have done something towards delaying that sad day when the last badgers, with the lessons of courage and endurance that they can teach, have vanished for ever.



WITH FALCONS AND GREYHOUNDS

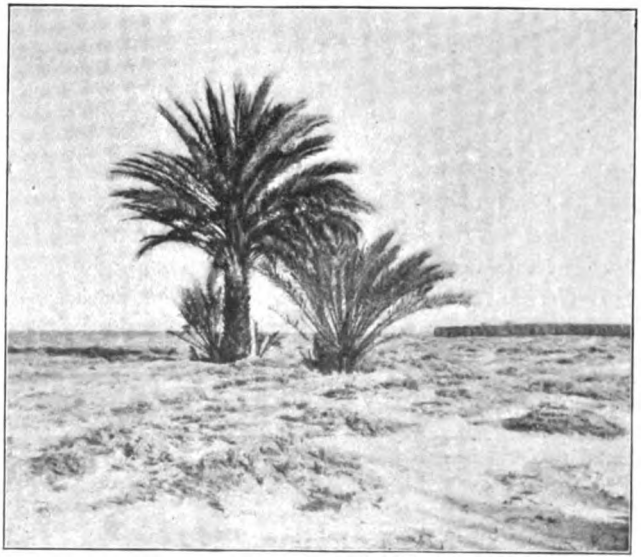
BY ROSALIND CHAMBERS

THERE is an erroneous idea existing in almost every European mind, that the desert consists of a dead flat expanse of bare sand, with a live lion at rare intervals. I shall, therefore, hardly be believed when I say that, though we had travelled two hundred miles into the Sahara, we were encamped in a fig and palm garden among hills only a day's journey from mountains. While resting there one afternoon, an Arab friend, Belkassem ben el Mokhtar, returned from a day's sport, and brought his bag to show to the ladies who had pitched their tent on his property. It consisted of a young gazelle, three hares, two live leverets, and a rolled-up hedgehog, the latter being brought as a curiosity for us to see, and disappointment being caused by our remarking that we had many at home. But the gazelle stirred my hunter's instincts, and I persuaded my host to take me with him the next morning.

Desert life at all events teaches you the value of early rising, for then you find fresh cool air and a springiness in your horse which, whether you start at two or nine, lasts only until mid-day.

Being accustomed to it, four o'clock did not seem at all early to be called, and I was on my horse by five, the sunrise still colouring the sky, and making the dark patches which represented oases look much nearer than they really were. My Western clothing was the only ugly spot in the landscape, but was amply atoned for by my handsome host, who was in a white burnous, orange silk jacket, gauze haik, heavily bound with strings of brown camel's hair, and a gun slung on his back. The falconer,

too, was a picture in himself; very swarthy from constant exposure, with an eye as keen as his own birds, and a long blue cloak, the hood drawn up over his head. Perched aloft thereon sat one of the falcons, another on his wrist, a couple more on the croup of his saddle. A dog, something like a pointer, ran loose, which afterwards worked very well and was extraordinarily obedient, turning instantly to word or hand, though he had never been whipped or kicked in his life. The three beaters in white cotton kept up with us untiringly the whole day, and held a couple of sloguies in the leash, ready to slip whenever needed. These are very like our English greyhounds both in shape and



THE SAHARA

colour—a light fawn predominates—but are rather smaller, and the hind quarters especially have not been bred to the same pitch of perfection. The feet are apt to be too long, but they can run a gazelle down and get over the rough stony ground in a wonderful way. Even in the Sahara they wear sheets in the winter, and as they are not nearly so fine drawn as ours, they are perhaps deeper in the chest than they appear to the eye; for Belkassem's came home very gaily after a fifteen-hour day two days in succession.

As we rode along the hills that slope away from the Zibans towards Lagouat, my host assured me that he would guarantee

that no Christian had ever been along that track before. As far as scenery was concerned there was nothing to attract them, the bare brown earth having neither grass nor bush to vary the monotony of its dreary colouring, and the round hills and vales being so much alike that even the natives cannot always tell one from another. No rain having fallen for nearly three years had made it even more barren than usual, so that the only variety was an occasional river-bed; of course there was no water in these, but a spring at the head of them had produced vegetation for a distance along both sides, the length varying from a few yards to a mile or two, according to the bulk of water and the

MY HOST

absorbing properties of the ground. It is near these that you go to look for your game, and there is enough variety in it to keep you very much on the alert, for the chances are equally in favour of gazelle, greater bustard, hare, partridge, golden plover, ortolan, sand-grouse, &c. We were prepared for all, though Belkassem's gun seemed to be confined to something sitting.

Bare as the hills are, there are plenty of blue hares, hardly larger than our rabbits, which constantly take refuge in holes; as soon as one of these was sighted the sloguies were slipped, and we galloped backwards and forwards over the stony ground, in and out of little gullies, seldom losing sight of our quarry. The greyhounds naturally ran mute, but there was plenty of music,

for the Arabs shouted all the time at the top of their voices. My three-year-old went very well, barring a habit he had of carrying his head bent back against the flap of the saddle, which did not tend to inspire confidence; but he had been ridden in fantasias, and I suppose acquired it there.

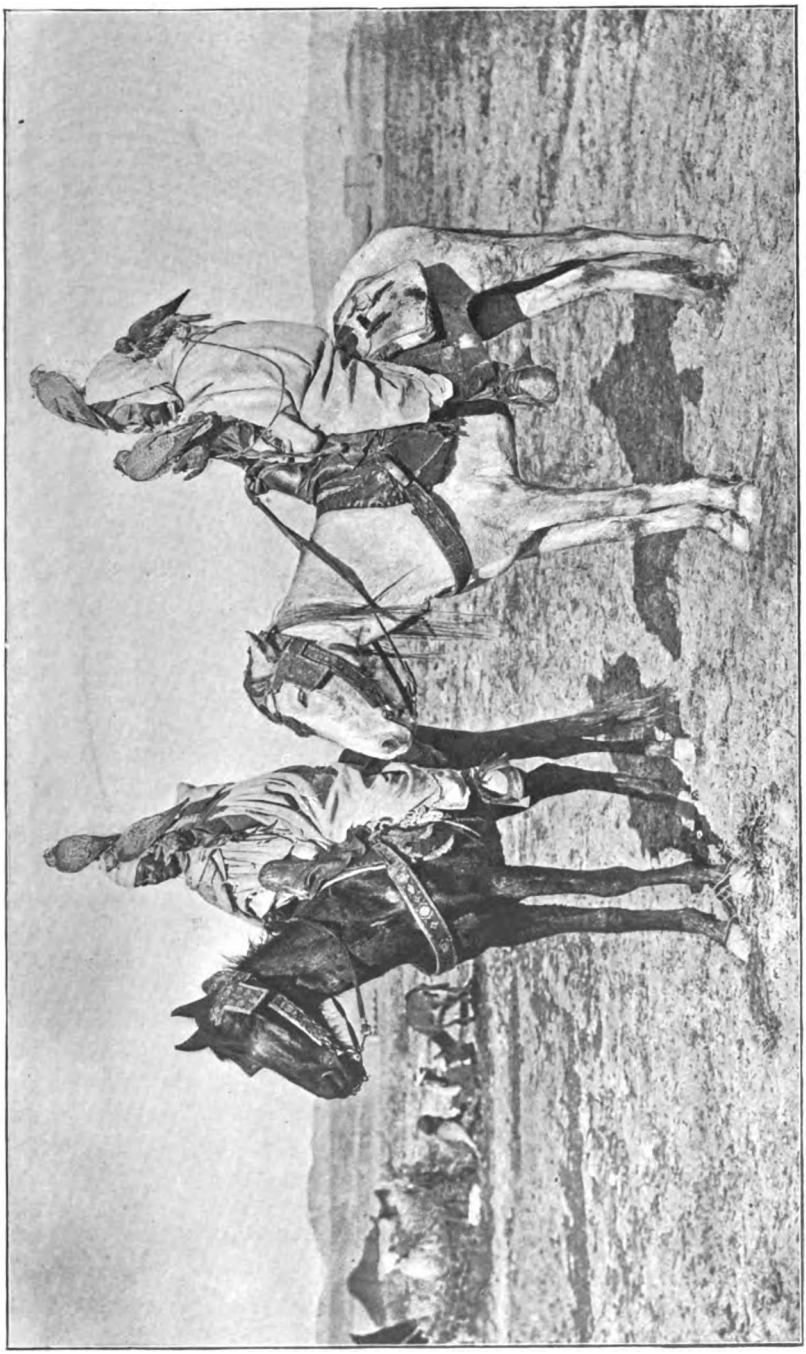
The first hare was taken alive and its legs tied, while it cried gently for help, quite differently from that piteous scream we hear at home. Presently another hare was started, and we had a long and exciting gallop first over and down some steep hills covered with loose stones, and then up a long gully with short grass and tiny purple iris, scattered with tamarisk bushes. The ground favouring the hare, the greyhounds over-ran her, and after

SLOGUIES

some delay we gave her up as lost, but were on a fresh one almost immediately, going back over very much the same ground, and seeing the sloguies pull her down on the hillside. Next, the one that had been lost was found and shot—of course, sitting. At that moment it was discovered that the first one which had been caught alive had escaped, and I secretly rejoiced, as a hare in confinement in a town must have a sorry life.

A pause for lunch gave our horses a rest, and milk was fetched for us from some tents near. As usual it was sour, for goat's milk only lasts sweet for a few hours; but Arabs do not mind that, and Belkassem could not understand why, in spite of the burning sun, I would hardly drink any.

We were still in hopes of finding gazelle, but the Bedouins



READY FOR A FANTASIA

who owned the goats had seen them that morning, and they had left before we came. Gazelle hunting ought to be done earlier in the year, as they are in large herds then, the plan pursued requiring great patience. As soon as they are sighted you gallop across behind and away from them, their curiosity causing them to ring round to you. Every time they do that you gallop away from them, continuing to do so until they get confidence enough to come within shot. Herds are said to consist of several hundreds, but in March the does are alone with their fawns. These are the gazelles of the plains, and are more delicate and finely made than those of the mountains, where moufflon, hyena,

FALCONERS

and jackal are also to be found. There are said to be panthers, but I fancy they are very rare now.

The morning having been chiefly given up to coursing, the falcons had not been used much, so their turn came after luncheon; but they missed a bustard and some partridges, apparently preferring hares to anything else. One of them stayed away, and though the falconer threw dead hares into the air, uttering the peculiar cry used to attract them, she refused to be taken. Another was then flown, and it was very pretty to see her bind the lure and drop with it to the ground over and over again, as the falconer threw the hare, though I regret to say that she several times carried it. The other hawk still declined to come,

but it did not much matter, as they were all to be loosed that week, the Arab method being to release them each spring for the breeding season, catching a fresh team in the autumn. The same ones are often taken several years in succession, and all were so tame, that I was allowed to handle them unhooded as much as I liked.

The Mohammedan law forbidding the eating of meat that has not been duly bled, caused all the hares to have their throats cut, and I thought we were going to be spared this ordeal by one

A BEDOUIN'S WIFE

going to ground, until the beaters announced that it was a jackal's lair, and that they should dig out.

'They are at home, too,' I remarked, putting my handkerchief to my nose.

'It may be so, Mademoiselle,' replied Belkassem; 'but, as a matter of fact, though foxes smell, jackals do not.'

This fact of natural history being contrary to all my preconceived ideas, I said nothing, but was mentally carried back to many an earth in the old country. Meantime the men tore at the earth and rocks like terriers, each trying to oust the others and do the work himself.

'There is nothing these men like so much as digging out. Yes, the beasts are undoubtedly at home,' continued my host, as half a yellow lizard, with a whipcord tail eighteen inches long, was pulled out. 'I sent to the falconer at three this morning, to say that he could come with me. Though he was about to begin his coffee, he neither waited to taste it nor to put on his shoes. Ha! you see he has now thrust his arm down the hole, and he tells me that he has the beast by the tail. They are often badly bitten in that way, yet he does not care a rap. I have just

LOOKING FOR GAME

offered him twenty francs to let go, but he says that I may cut his arm off, that I may kill him if I like, but that he will not let go.'

A scuffle ensued, ending in the falconer triumphantly drawing out a fine *fox*, which he deftly seized by the throat with his other hand. The pelt was in splendid condition, much paler in colour than ours, but he was just as bold, and did not struggle or betray the slightest fear. The men turned him down, slipping the greyhounds without giving a proper start, and he was presently carried back in triumph with his throat cut.

'The vixen is still in the hole,' they shouted, beginning to dig again. Some sweet little cubs a few days old were then

taken out, but I pleaded in vain for mother and children. Foxes, being regarded as vermin, were to be destroyed like rats, and I was obliged to sit by, unable to do anything, though I felt as cold and sick as if I had swallowed a live frog.

'It is the *demoiselle* who has brought the luck, and we shall always speak of this as the lady's day,' they cried in their joy; but they were fortunately too excited running after the sloguies to notice that I did not join them.

Last of all, the hare was extracted from the same hole and given a fair start, when we had another gallop after her, the greyhounds being trained to hold, but not to kill. Belkassem

THE EDGE OF AN OASIS

and I having outdistanced the rest, he demanded my pocket knife for the *coup-de-grâce*. I said then that it was time to go home. Personally I consider thirteen hours in the saddle enough any day, but, combined with distinct murder, it is more than sufficing.

These falcons were invariably fed on hare, and were in the most perfect plumage possible. They are so well-mannered that I saw five the year before, who had never seen a European, and probably no woman of any nationality, sitting perfectly quiet, unhooded, on the perch, while French and English ladies and gentlemen were stroking their heads and wings as if they were

cats. The Arabs of the Northern Sahara carry them on the left hand, though the Asiatics invariably use the right. The falconer removes the hood before handing the selected hawk to his master, so she is ready to dash after the quarry the moment it is spied, and is not dazzled by the sudden transition from darkness to tropical sunshine. The perch consists of a thick bar of wood held about a foot and a half from the ground by cross bars, which stands outside in the daytime, but is moved into the tent at night. On hunting mornings the hawks are lifted from it, and, no cadge being used, are carried on any portion of the falconer or his horse that comes handy, one invariably standing upon his head. This one is not attached in any way, but as the man turns or gallops, the wings are occasionally spread for balance, making him look like the warriors of ancient Gaul, whose helmets were decorated with eagle's plumes. A team usually consists of four females and a male. The jesses and leash of gazelle-skin stained red are exactly similar to ours, but no bell is used. The hoods, also of red leather, are finished at the top with a small ball like the Indian ones, only without ends; they are simply slipped over the head and not tied. While our men were digging out the foxes, the team was placed on the ground without anyone troubling about the one that was unhooded, who was perfectly quiet until a cub, which had been injured, had its throat cut, and was carelessly left only just out of her reach. She then struggled a good deal to get at it, but, the leashes being knotted together, was unable to; the rest did not seem aware that there was anything near them, and were quite undisturbed by their companion's exertions.

Of course a passage-hawk is always gentler than an eyess, but there seems to be something in the air of the Northern Sahara which makes every living thing good-humoured. Unlike the Egyptian desert, it is extraordinarily soothing to the nerves, which is perhaps the reason why the camels are never muzzled, the mules do not kick or scream, and the men are invariably sweet-tempered. There is a fortune awaiting a few eminent specialists who would start an hotel there, while the water has most valuable properties, and its taste of salt and pepper makes it nasty enough to be an ensured success as a digestive.

ETON CRICKET

BY HORACE HUTCHINSON

CRICKET at Eton was of an older institution than at its famous rival, the School on the Hill; yet it is almost a necessary consequence of the geographical position of Harrow that cricket there had not to fear the formidable rivalry of boating, which was so popular at the school in the valley of the silver Thames. Both schools, however, have been fortunate in the guides, philosophers, and friends that have devoted their loving labour to coaching the young cricketing talent. The Harrow boys had for years the invaluable services of the late Hon. Robert Grimston always at command, while at Eton the place of cricket mentor was fulfilled by the Rev. G. R. Dupuis, and, in later years, and perhaps even fuller measure, by Mr. R. A. H. Mitchell. Mr. Grimston has been taken—irreparable loss to the cricketing world, and more particularly to Harrow School—but Mr. Dupuis and Mr. Mitchell still remain, though the former has severed his formal connection with Eton.

The name of Mr. G. Dupuis appears in a famous match as early as 1815, but this was the father of the present upholder of the name. And even before this a Dupuis of an older generation still, father of the above and grandfather of the present, had taken honourable part in school cricket. The score of the 1815 match, which was something of a curiosity, may be transcribed at length. The bowler is, of course, not credited with wickets caught off his bowling. The following is the heading of the match; and in this regard it may be mentioned that 'Lord's new cricket ground' here referred to is the present ground, to

which Lord had then but recently moved, the first match having been played there in June of the previous year.

'A cricket match (made by John Slingsby, Esq.) between ten gentlemen of M.C.C., with Howard, a paid bowler, and eight Eton boys, with Lord F. Beauclerk, Mr. Slingsby, and Mr. Budd (Osbaldeston's bowling barr'd), and played on Lord's *new* cricket ground, the third and fourth of August 1815.'

Then follows the full score of the match :—

ETON

1st Innings		*2nd Innings*	
Mr. Richards, b. Mr. Tanner	7	b. Mr. Tanner	1
Mr. W. Roberts, b. Mr. Tanner	10	c. Mr. Tanner	30
Mr. G. Dupuis, run out	3	b. Howard	5
Mr. Budd, b. Howard	12	b. Mr. Tanner	4
Mr. Slingsby, run out	14	b. Mr. J. Barnard	7
Lord F. Beauclerk, b. Mr. Tanner	2	st. Mr. Vigne	25
Mr. J. Harding, c. Mr. Ward	13	b. Howard	1
Mr. Radcliffe, b. Howard	0	b. Howard	1
Mr. Bligh, run out	13	c. Mr. Price	10
Mr. Vivian, b. Howard	0	not out	0
Mr. Crowder, not out	3	b. Mr. Tanner	0
Byes	6	Byes	17
Total	88	Total	101

M.C.C.

1st Innings		*2nd Innings*	
Mr. Brand, c. Mr. Radcliffe	0	b. Mr. Budd	8
Mr. Ward, c. Ld. F. Beauclerk	4	c. Mr. Dupuis	0
Mr. Vigne, b. Mr. Budd	12		10
Mr. Tanner, c. Mr. Budd	1	c. Mr. Budd	8
Howard, c. Mr. Slingsby	0	st. Mr. Budd	16
Mr. Shabner, c. Mr. Harding	1	b. Ld. F. Beauclerk	20
Mr. Osbaldeston, b. Ld. F. Beauclerk	5	b. Mr. Budd	14
Mr. Price, b. Mr. Budd	11	not out	17
Mr. H. Barnard, b. Mr. Budd	3		
Mr. J. Barnard, c. Mr. Dupuis	10	not out	12
Mr. Ladbrooke, not out	22		
Byes	9	Byes	2
Total	78	Total	107

M.C.C. won by four wickets.

I am indebted for the above, as well as for much information about early cricket at Eton, to the kindness of the Rev. G. R. Dupuis. Likely enough the score of that match has been published before, though I have not happened to come across it; but in any case no great harm is done by repeating it, and its copyright must have expired. Mr. Osbaldeston's bowling was barred, no doubt, on account of its pace and in pity for the

boys' shins—also a little, perhaps, out of merciful regard for the wicketkeeper and the several longstops that generally were required to stop the 'Squire's' deliveries. In those days men and boys did not go in gloved and padded—at least, a second pair of silk stockings, with the tops of the outer pair turned down, was the utmost that public opinion permitted in the way of protective armour. The regular Etonian dress for a *match* at that time was 'tights'—*i.e.* breeches buckled at the knee, with two pairs of silk stockings, the top or outer pair folded down over the ankle to protect it, and top hats. As lately as 1847—only fifty years or so ago—a certain member of the Eton eleven (afterwards captain of the Cambridge University team and at present a well-known banker) invariably wore a tall black hat in a *match*, though he contented himself with a less imposing head-piece in practice.

Mr. Dupuis's grandfather was in the school eleven about 1760, at which time the eleven used to play about a match a year, but the first match with Harrow did not take place until 1805; and even that is not considered by the severest cricket critics as a really representative match, irresponsible people, such as poets—Lord Byron, for instance—taking part. But Lord Byron made a few runs and bowled a wicket, nevertheless, though he was not in the eleven.

Taking the year 1815 as the date of the dawn of the true light of history, we find that the big matches were played on Upper Club (which at that date went by the name of Upper Shooting Fields, because, in the dim bygone ages of the toxophilite, they used to shoot there with bow and arrow), and on Lower Club (which was called, for an analogous reason, Lower Shooting Fields). There was an oppidan game in those days on Lower Club, and a colleger game, even as now, below Sheep's Bridge; but they had no distinctive names, neither were they strictly exclusive, for occasionally collegers played in Lower Club and *vice versâ*. As a rule, however, each seems to have kept to its own place. There were other double games, too, dotted here and there on the Playing Fields, claiming squatters' rights, but without special names.

There used, at that time, to be three annual school matches, besides the collegers and oppidans, which was then considered quite one of the big cricket events of the year. Now that match has sunk into a secondary importance, largely from the fact that members of the eleven do not take part in it; but in the old days there was no restriction of that kind, and the college then

appears to have claimed most of the best cricketers in the school —a union of brains with eye and muscle which has not prevailed in later years. Mr. Dupuis's father told him that in the first year of our historical era, 1815, the eleven was made up of eight collegers and only three oppidans; but that, nevertheless, in the collegers and oppidans match the latter won. The collegers were so dejected in consequence that they draped their bats in *crape*, and so hung them in Long Chamber for more than a week. And there they might perhaps have been hanging now but for the prowess of one John Harding, a King's Scholar, who, in a match against the Epsom Club—one of the three annual fixtures at that time—scored the huge score, for a schoolboy of the day, of seventy-four runs. By which achievement it was thought that he had redeemed the character of college, and in consequence the bats were taken down, the crape removed, and the willow restored to its proper and active use.

Excellent John Harding! For thus terminating the due penance of college, or at least for his prowess in the Epsom match, he was given a bat—the said bat being named (presumably after the donor) 'Mrs. Keate.' Presentation bats were not so numerous then as in these days, when centuries are as common as blackberries. 'Mrs. Keate' is now in Mr. Dupuis's possession, and both she and the score of the match were exhibited, by request, in Upper School as lately as 1891.

Under the leadership of the famous Mr. B. Aislabie, the Epsom Club was then flourishing, but it came to an end—died of inanition apparently—a few years later, and Mr. Aislabie then persuaded the club to give its tent to the Eton boys. This tent is actually the nucleus, so to speak (one does not know how much of the original fabric may be left), of the present Eton dining tent. It underwent some very extensive renovation under Mr. Dupuis's auspices; but he was very careful to see that, whatever else was renewed, the old 'arms' should be left intact.

'Sixpenny' was started in 1831 by Mr. G. J. Boudier, for lower boys, and continued to be restricted to their use until the school acquired 'The Field' for cricketing purposes. 'Lower' Sixpenny then migrated thither, and a new club, called 'Upper' Sixpenny, took the old Sixpenny ground, between Lower College (so-called) and 'Stevens's Wall.' It was not until then that any cricket was played elsewhere than the Playing Fields.

Later on, chiefly owing to Mr. Dupuis's influence, the college gave 'Jordan' as well for cricket uses, and did away with a path that used to run up the middle of the ground. Part of the ground

between that path and the Fellows' Houses used to be called Lower Twopenny—pronounced 'tuppenny.' The name, of little worth, seems to have been given to this unfortunate patch by way of indignity, as it were, lest it should ever dare to assert itself on an equality with Sixpenny. Lower Twopenny was the scene of a loose sort of game played 'after six,' without any distinctive club name or subscription.

'Aquatics' always played where they play to-day, but only, in Mr. Dupuis's time, 'after twelve.' It originated in a scratch game of boating fellows, and so grew to the dignity of a club, which at one time had extremely strict rules against the pernicious practice of 'blocking,' infusing much life and movement into the game. We should like to see the rule revived in the practice matches of some of our county teams—it might make them a little more cheerful to watch when they come to head-quarters.

Mr. Dupuis relates a circumstance that is almost incredible, though beyond question true, that as late as 1853, when he was second in eleven and sixth form, the then headmaster requested him to wear his gown when he went to play cricket in Upper Club.

In those early days there was scarcely any coaching. 'Picky' Powell and Jack Byles, professionals, used to bowl now and then to boys in the eleven, and in 1851 C. Brown, of Notts, and J. Challen were engaged, by the kindness of Mr. E. H. Pickering, to coach the eleven for a fortnight near the end of the half. Next year James Lillywhite was regularly engaged as coach, and the year following Martingell; but it is no discredit to those who have had the training of the Eton eleven, both then and in the years since, to say that it has owed more to amateur than to professional tuition. Mr. R. A. H. Mitchell avows that F. Bell, who came to Eton from Cambridge in 1860, is the only professional who ever taught him anything in his schoolboy days.

Singularly enough cricket does not seem to have been a very popular game at Eton until comparatively lately, and even now there is not the whole-souled devotion to it that exists at Harrow and Winchester, where the Eton match is the great event of the year. The river is its formidable rival. The 'dry bob' of some forty years ago was the subject of many uncomplimentary, scarcely parliamentary, epithets, which had the effect of turning the weak-kneed away from their natural bent towards cricket. The only games that existed in 1856 were Upper Club, Lower Club, Sixpenny, and Lower College, the latter being confined to collegers who did not play either in Lower Club or Sixpenny. Another game, in which oppidans could play, was added in 1859 or 1860.

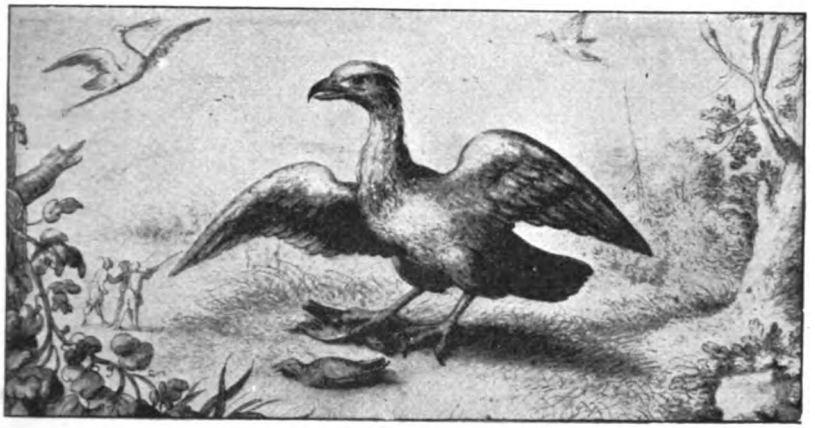
The number of games has gone on increasing ever since, and at the present time there are no fewer than eighteen. Even this is found to be inadequate, and a large new ground is even now in process of being made.

The increase, of course, corresponds in slight measure with the increase in the number of boys, which has risen from 666 in 1856 to 1,030 in 1897; but while the school numbers have not quite doubled themselves, the games are more than four times as many, and yet more are needed. The school has always suffered from an insufficiency of really good grounds. Football is played on most of them, to the serious detriment of the wicket, and always there are those trees all round the ground—magnificent umbrage, but fatal to the evening light. Also in Upper Club it is necessary to pitch the wickets east and west, which again is apt to be trying for the batsman as the sun sinks low. Let us hope that the authorities will sacrifice their landscape gardening instincts in the interests of good cricket on the new ground, and not surround it with avenues of noble elms. Neither are the hours of work arranged as kindly for cricket practice as at Harrow and at Winchester, where, even on whole schooldays, an hour or two in the afternoon is free. At Eton there are no free hours in these laborious days until the evening.

Until lately, too, the grace allowed to players in the Eton and Harrow match was very meagre. In 1856 and 1857 there was no Harrow match at all. (The Winchester match, it may be noted, was the older institution, and seems to have proceeded without the same interruption.) Inferentially it seems probable that this interruption was on account of the reluctance of the authorities to give the players leave off school. And even in 1858, when the Harrow match was resumed, the Eton eleven had to be in school until twelve o'clock on the first day. In more ways than one was this hard upon them, for no sooner had they put their noses inside Lord's than the bell was rung and out they had to go, to field or bat as the case might be. The Harrow boys, on the contrary, had been practising away for some while to their heart's content, whereas not one of the Eton team was able to have a single ball. Eton laboured under the same disadvantage in 1859, but in the following year it seems that the authorities took a broader view of cricketing interests, and the eleven had a more liberal leave.

No one, humanly speaking, can precisely determine the exact value that should attach to the thirty-two years of minutely careful coaching that Mr. R. A. H. Mitchell has given to the school team. Himself the greatest batsman, save one, in the

opinion of most competent authorities, that the world has ever seen, he served the eleven with yeoman's service when, as a boy, he was a member of it, and afterwards, since going to Eton as a master, he has devoted practically all the summertide leisure of thirty-three years to imparting to the boys some of his own skill. As evidence in demonstration of the value of that coaching one may point to the fact that in House matches—so great and useful a feature of Eton cricket, and exciting so much enthusiasm during the last three weeks of the summer half—his own House won the cup no fewer than eight years in succession. These House matches are of the greatest value in unearthing and bringing into the light talents that otherwise might have remained for ever buried. Another testimony, no doubt, to 'Mike's' coaching is the successful part that his sons have taken in cricket, three of them successively having played in the Eton eleven. One may ascribe this notable result to the credit of his teaching mainly, rather than to heredity, because it is not as a rule seen that great cricketing qualities descend from father to son. Generally speaking, cricketing families mean batches of brothers such as the Lubbocks, Lytteltons, Studds, or, at Harrow, Walkers and Langs. But, quite apart from these exceptional pieces in evidence, the whole cricket history of the school during more than thirty years is a testimony to Mr. Mitchell's training, and not the cricket played at and for the school only, but also the fine cricket that has been shown by old members when they have gone on to the Universities or into the world, and have represented Oxford or Cambridge, Gentlemen *v.* Players, or, greatest distinction of all England *v.* Australia.



SPORT WITH SOUTH AFRICAN GAME BIRDS

BY H. A. BRYDEN

THE great game of South Africa has always claimed and obtained the bulk of the attention of that army of sportsmen who, during the last fifty years, have exploited the wide territories south of the Zambesi. So much has this been the case, that the game birds of all this country are comparatively little known to Europeans. Yet South Africa is peculiarly rich in many species of sporting birds, all of which are well worth the attention of the gunner and naturalist. And, as big game becomes each year scarcer and less accessible, it is not too much to suppose that the many Englishmen who now-a-days turn towards the vast and interesting congeries of countries that form South Africa will more and more direct their superfluous energies to the feathered game to be found so plentifully in the veldt around them.

Wherever one travels in South Africa, game birds of some sort or another are invariably to be met with, and often extremely good and interesting shooting is to be enjoyed with them. When one mentions that between Cape Point and the Zambesi there are to be found no fewer than eleven species of francolin—the 'partridges' and 'pheasants' of the colonists; ten kinds of bustard, ranging from the *paauw*, which attains a weight of 40 lbs., to the black koorhaan, a bird of about the size of a black-cock; three species of guinea fowl; four of quail; and four of sandgrouse, it will be easily seen that there is no lack of sporting

material among the feathered game of South Africa. In addition to this list, three kinds of snipe, several species of plover, including two *dikkops*, or thick-knees, and an innumerable array of wild fowl, are to be found in different parts of the country.

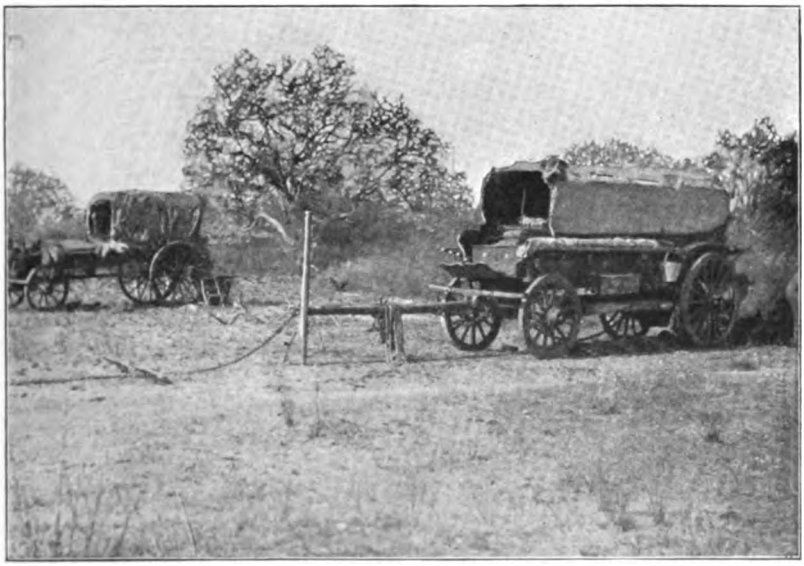
Many of these game birds are extremely plentiful, and are to be found in all parts of the veldt, wherever the wanderer may turn his footsteps. The Boer, thanks to the superabundance of heavier game which has hitherto been ready to his hand, pays no attention to bird shooting—he regards it to this day with contempt or indifference. The native only occasionally snares feathered game, or knocks over an odd bird or two now and again with his knob-kerrie. So that the Englishman practically has in South Africa, as his competitors in this branch of sport, only the raptorial birds of the country and the jackals, wild cats, and small carnivora that haunt the veldt. It must be confessed that these feathered and furred marauders levy pretty severe tribute upon the game of South Africa. Still, there is abundance for all sporting purposes.

In Cape Colony, the Transvaal, Natal, and the Orange Free State, it is customary to obtain permission to shoot from owners of farms; this, as a rule, is not difficult. In the case of British colonists, and of most Dutch in the Cape Colony, it is nearly always heartily conceded. In the native territories of Bechuanaland and the north, where the land is little settled at present, the gunner may shoot practically wherever he pleases; there are no fences, and the wide veldt is as free as the air that encircles it. Even in the Cape Colony and the more settled regions, the traveller passing by Cape cart or buggy from one part of the country to another usually carries a shot gun with him. Opportunities for a shot along the roadside frequently occur, and objection is seldom indeed raised to the modest toll taken by the traveller on such a journey. There is, in fact, rarely any person seen to make such an objection, and more often than not—so sparsely is the country, even in Cape Colony, settled at present—scarcely a soul is encountered, except at the night's resting-place, during a day's drive.

One of the great charms of bird shooting in South Africa is that the sport is so truly wild and unfettered. The pleasures of the vast free veldt are not possibly to be over-estimated; and, thanks to the altitude of the country and the magnificent climate, the sportsman can shoot, even in the heat of noon, not only without fear of sunstroke, but with the keenest sense of enjoyment.

It should be remembered that all over South Africa close seasons are now proclaimed, although they are not, unfortunately,

from the vastness of the country, always very rigidly enforced. They vary in different districts, but, as a general rule, it may be taken that the sportsman may count on enjoying game-bird shooting of all kinds from the end of February to the beginning of September or October. In Cape Colony the close time begins in August. The shooting season, therefore, up-country, embraces the magnificent period of South African winter, when, as a rule, not a drop of rain may be expected to fall for six months on end. The air at this season upon the high plateau lands of Bechuanaland and the interior is clear, dry, and marvellously exhilarating; the



SHOOTING WAGGONS OUTSPANNED

nights are cool; the life in a waggon or under canvas is of the healthiest and most delightful description.

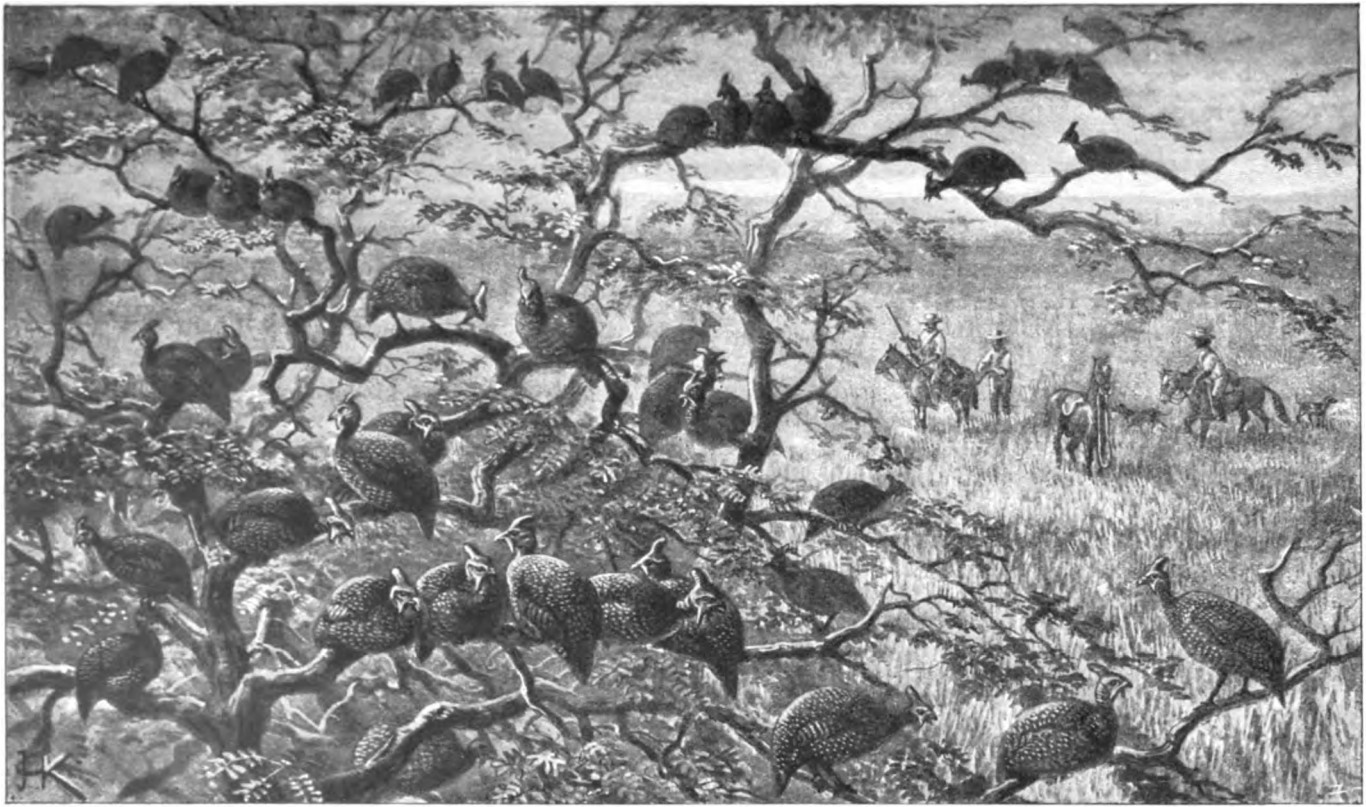
In addition to the birds I have enumerated, hares are frequently encountered in the veldt. These animals, especially in the vicinity of native kraals, have, however, the reputation of being very unclean feeders, and are not, therefore, looked upon with much favour from a culinary point of view. Small buck, such as steinbok and duiker, are as likely as not to be encountered during a day's shoot. They fall readily to the shot gun—the left barrel slightly choked and a charge of No. 2 shot, a combination very useful for bustard shooting, may be relied upon to bring these small antelopes to bag

—and their flesh, especially that of the steinbok, is a welcome addition to the evening meal.

Touching the capacities of the various South African sporting birds for table purposes, the magnificent paauw or Kori bustard stands easily first; the Stanley bustard and Ludwig's bustard—both very large birds—run an excellent second. Next comes the guinea fowl, the young birds of which are tender and most delicious eating. The delicate white-fleshed little Nswimpi partridge, known to naturalists as the Coqui francolin, affords excellent eating among the partridges; while the 'redwing' partridge and its near ally the Orange River francolin, as well as the Pileated francolin and bush koorhaan (rufous-crested bustard) are not by any means bad table birds. The quails and the 'dikkops' (thick-knee plover) furnish also very good eating. The remaining francolins, and the various koorhaans, or lesser bustards, are only moderately good as table birds. Still, cut up and stewed in the pot, with guinea fowls and other delicacies, they furnish forth a by no means bad repast, and, with the hunger sauce of the veldt, are readily and gratefully appreciated by the healthy gunner. The breast of a well-stewed koorhaan is, in fact, not at all a despisable quantity. The sandgrouse are hard and dry-fleshed; their skins are quite the toughest of all the sporting birds; and as a rule they are not highly appreciated even by the sharp-set sportsman of the veldt.

Many of the game birds above enumerated are extremely plentiful, and are to be found in nearly all parts of the veldt. This is especially the case with several of the francolins—notably the 'redwing,' Orange River francolin, and Coqui francolin (Nswimpi of the natives), as well as certain of the lesser bustards, known invariably to the colonists by their Dutch cognomen of 'Koorhaan.' In many of the districts of the far interior the common guinea fowl (*Numida cornuta*) is to be encountered in immense bands, especially during the dry winter season, when water is scarce and troops of many hundreds of these fine game birds frequent the desert pools or pans to quench their thirst. Sandgrouse are so common as to be scarcely reckoned by colonists among the game birds, and may be shot in scores at isolated vleis or desert pools, whither they resort at night and morning, at a single discharge of the 'scatter-gun.'

Where the veldt is so vast and grass so abundant, it would be an utter impossibility for the gunner to make a respectable bag without the aid of a sporting dog. Setters, retrievers, and spaniels, chiefly for the reason that their coats handicap them



THEY CAN BE DRIVEN INTO TREES, AND THENCE AFFORD EASY SHOTS AS THEY FLY OFF

terribly in a country so full of thorny bush and burrs, are not often shot over. The pointer is almost invariably made use of, and does his work, despite heat, drought, hard ground, and the vexatious habits of the game, upon the whole, extremely well. The running habits of many of the game birds—especially the bustards and guinea fowl—are very trying to dogs, and a pointer that is decently broken to stand to partridges, and yet understands guinea fowl and bustards, is a treasure indeed. English imported dogs are of little use; the climate, heat and hard ground are too much for them, and they are, moreover, often debarred for long periods—from fear of rabies—from being imported at the Cape. There are fair numbers of colonial-bred pointers to be obtained for from 5*l.* to 10*l.* apiece. As a rule they are not what an Old Country sportsman would call well mannered. A well-broken South African pointer is worth from 10*l.* to 20*l.* at any time. But in the veldt even the half-broken pointer is invaluable. The francolins and quails lie extremely close, and the gunner, as soon as the dog indicates that game is afoot, can usually get up and obtain his shot without difficulty. Bush koorhaan, too, capital sporting birds, with a wavering flight like the woodcock's, lie well among the bush and thin forest. They get up very silently, and the pointer is always useful in finding and standing to them. As for the other koorhaans, the gunner must have patience and get accustomed to their irritating habits. But even with them the pointer is always invaluable. Guinea fowl, although they are desperate runners, are to be circumvented. They can be driven into trees, and thence afford easy shots as they fly off. Or they can, once shot at, be induced to lie like stones, especially if young birds are about; in such a case, with the aid of a pointer, extremely pretty shooting can be obtained. I have seen a covey of these birds completely cowed by the presence of the dog, which had got unexpectedly among them. On these occasions they lay excellently in the long grass until we had bagged several members of the troop.

When the waggon is trekking slowly through the veldt, and there is not sufficient time to devote to the serious pursuit of heavy game, many and many a day of delightful sport can be enjoyed by spreading out on one side or other of the waggon track and allowing the pointers to range ahead in search of game birds. I am assuming, of course, that the sportsmen are mounted. Sport on foot can be very well obtained near a farm or settled quarters, but even near the homestead a steady shooting pony is a great comfort in a hot climate. The gunners can thus

enliven the tedium of a long waggon journey—it is to be remembered that the average speed of an ox-waggon is seldom more than two miles or two and a half miles an hour—and have the pleasure, as well as the satisfaction, of providing an ample evening meal against the time when the waggons are at last outspanned, the cheery camp fire is set alight, and the pot begins to simmer. Many and many a good day of this primitive but extremely delightful form of shooting have I enjoyed when travelling up-country in South Africa. One of the great charms of this sport is that you never know what may be the game in front of you. It may be a partridge (Orange River francolin), or Nswimpi, the dainty little Coqui francolins, which lie so well; it may be a handsome Vaal koorhaan (bustard), or a big troop of guinea fowl; or it may be, if bush and timber are adjacent, the graceful bush koorhaan, or rufous-crested bustard. Again, it may be the tiny button quail, or a hare or a steinbok or duiker squatting in its form. You never know, as a matter of fact, what game is to rise in front of you. The noisy and petulant black and white koorhaan—the cock—with its brisk scolding call, will, of course, always let you know of his vicinity. Out upon the great grass flat yonder you see his head go up and hear his clamorous, grating refrain. You follow him up, and at last he mounts into the air, still scolding noisily, and giving warning to every denizen of the veldt of the gunner's advent. But the rascal seldom flies far. He circles high in air for a few minutes, then drops to the veldt again, his long legs dangling beneath him. If you press forward at that moment, you will get him. Or you may circle round him, and so cow him and baffle his running flight. He squats now, neck and body flat upon the soil, hoping you may pass by. But your approach is too dangerous. The villain once more rises upon the air with harsh 'Kraak! Kraak!' It is his last refrain, and he falls an easy victim to the gun at twenty-five paces. Curiously enough, the hen bird of this species makes no sound whatever, and rises from the grass veldt even more silently than does the ghost-like bush koorhaan.

Perhaps I can best illustrate South African game-bird shooting by describing an average day of sport in the westward region of British Bechuanaland. We were trekking in the direction of Morokweng, a Bechuana native town, which stands just upon the edge of the Kalahari Desert. It was the month of April. The last of the rains had fallen two nights before; the air was cool and pleasant; the South African winter was close at hand. We had an early breakfast in the open, struck the tent, which

THE VILLAIN ONCE MORE RISES UPON THE AIR WITH HARSH 'KRAAK! KRAAK!'

two of us used at night—the others sleeping in the waggon—lashed it on the buck-rail of the waggon, saw the donkeys inspanned, and rode off. On this trip we were using a span of sixteen donkeys. On the whole, oxen are preferable; their pace is slow enough, but donkeys travel about half a mile an hour less, and, through deep sand, such as we were traversing, average little more than one and a half mile an hour. This is desperately slow progress, sixteen miles in a long day being a good day's work. Leaving the waggon to follow us on, we descended the shallow valley—*laagte*, as it is called in South Africa—and rose the further side. There were some good pools of water standing in the bed of the *laagte*, and we had heard the sharp call of francolin soon after dawn from this direction, and we therefore expected to pick up a few birds before entering the belt of thick timber which lay beyond. Nor were we disappointed. Our two pointers, Lassie and Don, were not long in feathering about the crest of the valley. Presently, one of them stood. Dove, one of our number, dismounted and walked quietly forward. A brace of Coqui francolin got up close at hand—they lie extremely close, these birds—and, after due law, were neatly grassed with a right and left. Don, a big liver-coloured, half-broken pointer, worked, for a wonder, very steadily, and further search among the rocks and grass resulted in Dove bagging another leash of these beautiful little partridges, near this spot. Two and a half brace to one gun in ten minutes made a capital beginning to our day's sport.

Meanwhile, after watching Dove bring down his first brace, St. Stephens and I were following Lassie, the other pointer, a little more to the right. Just before reaching the fringe of bush which here guarded the woodland, Lassie found and stood to game. As we expected, there were some partridges afoot, probably belonging to the same covey as that which Dove had got amongst. The birds lay extraordinarily close, but after some trouble—Lassie standing meanwhile as steadily as a statue of bronze—we flushed a brace almost from under our feet, and almost simultaneously brought them down. Another of the same francolins fell to my gun almost immediately. Further quartering by Lassie discovered no fresh birds, and we mounted and rode on. Four brace of Coqui francolin thus early was no bad start, and, bidding temporary farewell to Dove, we moved into the forest, hereabouts consisting mainly of bastard yellow-wood, varied with a few giraffe acacias. These Coqui francolin (Nswimpi), by the way, are not found much south of the Molopo River; but in middle and north Bechuanaland, and many parts

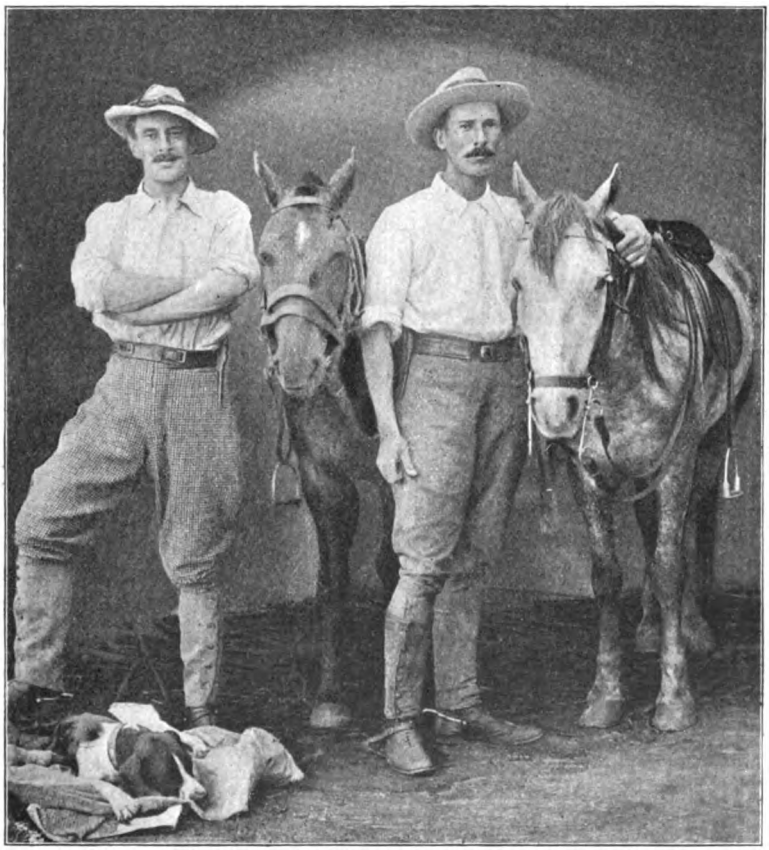
of Rhodesia, they are quite the commonest of the partridges. They are slightly smaller than the English partridge, and are beautifully symmetrical little game birds. The head colouring is of a rich chestnut brown, the neck brilliant yellowish-orange, while the feet and legs are of the same bright hue. This francolin takes its scientific name, *Francolinas subtorquatus*, from some dark markings which form a lunate collar or gorget across the throat. Altogether, one of the handsomest game birds in the world.

Just as we entered the forest, a bush koorhaan rose stealthily, with a single note, near St. Stephens, flickered through the trees with that dodging flight characteristic of these birds, and went down again. St. Stephens dismounted and followed Lassie to the grassy spot where the bustard had settled. This time the koorhaan lay closer, and, rising within easy distance, was cleverly snapped before getting among the trees again. This bush koorhaan can be readily distinguished from other bustards by the purplish-pink crest, from which it derives its classical name, *Eupodotis ruficrista*. The upper colouring is reddish brown, handsomely variegated. The breast and stomach are an intense black. A curious point about this bustard is that, if the downy under-feathering is examined, it will be seen that, close to the body, it is tinged with a delicate puce-pink. This colouring fades greatly after death. The bush koorhaan is an excellent sporting bird, well known north of the Vaal River, and is seldom found far from bush and forest. It has a singular habit of playing aërial frolics at certain seasons at about the hour of sunset. This habit has been very well described and illustrated in Mr. J. G. Millais' delightful book 'A Breath from the Veldt.' In these strange evolutions the birds rise from the grass, fly straight up into the air to a height of a hundred or a hundred and fifty feet, and then, closing their wings, drop head foremost very swiftly to earth again, reopening the wings again just as they alight. No one has yet explained the true inwardness of these manœuvres. But the African bustards are a mysterious race, whose habits—many of them very singular—are at present not very well known.

Picking up the dead koorhaan, we mounted and rode on. There was no great prospect of sport amid the thick forest here, so, presently striking the sandy track which here was ennobled by the title of road, we moved steadily on. Since the copious rainfall of the previous day or two, quite a new generation of butterflies had arisen. Wherever a grassy glade occurred in the forest

and flowers grew, there were many brilliant insects to be seen. I had a net slung to the saddle, and occasionally picked up a specimen or two, but we had previously captured most of those to be seen this morning.

Towards ten o'clock we emerged from the belt of forest, and entered upon a rolling plain covered with long grass. Occasionally,



SOUTH AFRICAN SHOOTING PONIES

patches of grey-green Vaal bush marked this plain, and a few spreading giraffe acacia (camelthorns) were to be noted here and there. Picking up the rest of our friends, we now spread out in a wide line, about a mile in breadth, and steadily walked our nags through the grass veldt. We had no great luck, picking up but a single bush koorhaan and an Orange River francolin before twelve o'clock. At this hour we off-saddled for awhile under an

acacia tree, knee-haltered the horses and let them graze, ate a biscuit, took a drink from our water-bottles—which contained lime juice and water—and smoked our pipes.

Shortly after quitting this resting place, the discovery was made that one of the field-glasses was missing. They had, no doubt, been taken off and laid down with the guns and other impedimenta. The grass was very thick at this spot, and a close search failed unfortunately to reveal the missing glasses. I know of another pair of derelict field-glasses, lost by my friend Dove during a hard gallop after wildebeest, upon one of the broad grassy wastes up in far Ngamiland. Some day or other, within the next two hundred years, when this vast land becomes settled up, I suppose these derelicts will come to light again. The loss of field glasses in the veldt, where they are particularly useful to the owners when on the look out for big game, is a very serious one.

In the afternoon sport improved a trifle, and we picked up every now and again a bird or two to add to the bag. Dove secured a brace of variegated sandgrouse, birds of extremely handsome plumage, and a bush koorhaan, shot, curiously enough, far out on the plain—the only instance I remember of shooting these birds far from bush or timber. Mackay, St. Stephens and myself picked up two or three brace of Orange River francolin and the noisy black and white koorhaan as we rode along. It was extremely interesting to watch the sport from a distance. Looking along our thin line to the right hand, for instance, I was not able to make out in the long grass the dogs ranging in front of Dove or Mackay, except when they were leaping in their gallop a little higher than usual. But one could always distinguish the point itself. The mounted man would pull up his pony quietly, dismount, and wade forward warily, middle deep in grass, towards some spot where his pointer (unseen to me) stood to the game. The gun was held at the ready. Presently, a dark object would rise from the yellowish-green grass and fly off. The bird and the sportsman, his gun now up, were alike momentarily outlined clear against the hard pale blue horizon. Then would come a tiny puff of smoke—we were using Schultz powder—the bird fell into the long grass, and the crisp report of the gun followed through the still air and struck upon the ear. Sometimes a steinbok would dart from its form amid the grass, and speed away. We got no shot this afternoon, however, at these buck.

Needless to say, upon this, as upon all other occasions beneath the brilliant sun of Bechuanaland, we rode and shot in shirt sleeves—coatless and waistcoatless. A waistcoat, indeed, is

seldom seen in the veldt. A coat is useful at night and early morning, when the air is keen, and even searching. We found the waggon halted at a pan of water near the roadside. Here we watered the horses and dogs. The latter had by this time had enough of it; under the strong sun of the morning their keenness, poor beasts, had mostly vanished. Two of them—one a mere mongrel with a dash of pointer blood—had behaved rather badly during the afternoon, and I fear a good deal of strong language was to be heard volleying across the veldt. At three o'clock the waggon trekked on again slowly, till 8 P.M., when we outspanned for supper near a deep limestone pool of magnificently clear water. This was at a spot called Kudunque. We shot little between three and sunset, keeping mainly to the road and riding on ahead of the waggon. Near a brack pan—what would be known in America as a salt-lick—some way before reaching Kudunque, we discovered spoor of gemsbok and hartebeest. Near here, too, while resting our nags and poking about grass veldt and bushes, we picked up two brace of extremely interesting birds. These were the lovely violet-winged courser—birds belonging to the great family of plovers—which migrate to these regions during the season of the rains. My dog stood to a bird, which, after some trouble, I put up and secured. Shortly after, I shot another. This very beautiful plover—or courser, as it should be properly called—*Cursorius chalcopterus*—is to be distinguished at once by the wonderful metallic violet-bronze colouring of the wing tips, quite one of the most beautiful things to be seen in bird colouring. The rest of the wing feathering is black, the throat and under parts of the body are pure white, while the eye ring is reddish orange and the legs are brilliant vermilion. Altogether a most notable bird. These coursers are not very common, and it was in truth a keen pleasure to secure specimens. The flesh we found to be excellent eating. Meanwhile, Dove had flushed and secured a brace of tiny bush quail, diminutive game birds about the size of a sparrow. Naturalists designate them hemipodes (this particular species is known scientifically as *Turnix lepurana*); South Africans are content to call them bush quail, or button quail.

Before the waggon came up, we counted the bag. It was but a modest one. Five and a half brace of partridges, two and a half brace of koorhaan (bustard), a brace each of sandgrouse, bush quail and plover—in all twenty-two head. With the thirteen head of francolins and koorhaans we had shot the evening before at the last camp, this would, however, suffice to

keep the fleshpots supplied for the next twenty-four hours. There was a wonderful sunset, and then, sharp and clear in the pale green sky, came swimming up the clean silvery crescent of a young moon. Just below it, the sky was rose pink; beneath that again the lower horizon was a blaze of crimson and orange. A magnificent spectacle, indeed, in the solemn evening veldt.

We now collected brushwood, lighted a huge fire, and began to pluck and cut up the game, and presently, more than an hour after dark, the waggon turned up. The big Kaffir pot was put on the fire at once, and the stew set going. An hour's cooking sufficed very well; some Worcester sauce, salt, pepper, an onion or two, and some potatoes added flavour. In the last ten minutes half a pint of Pontac, a rough red Cape wine, was added. The result afforded us—sharp-set as we were—a supper fit for princes. Game soup all round first. Then a tender stew of the various ingredients that formed our *olla podrida*. Plenty of good coffee and tinned milk washed down the repast. Then followed a smoke and an hour of chat, stretched on our blankets, around the cheerful camp fire. At ten o'clock we were not sorry to seek the tent and waggon, and, beneath that clear starlit sky, to sleep the wonderful and refreshing sleep of the veldt. The sport—measured by our English ideas—obtained on such a day as I have attempted to depict may seem absurdly inadequate. Some days are, of course, very much better than others. I have known occasions when the bag footed up to more than forty head of feathered game. But the feeling of health, freedom, and satisfaction to be obtained from these simple days of sport in the veldt is not to be weighed against the mere numerical total of the game secured. And it is to be remembered that this form of South African shooting is undertaken primarily for the purpose of procuring a food supply, and not by way of amassing a record bag.

HORNCASTLE HORSE FAIR

BY G. H. JALLAND

SITUATED at the foot of the Lincolnshire Wolds, midway between Lincoln and Boston, lies the ancient market town of Horncastle, famous throughout the world for its great horse fair held annually in the month of August. To account for the existence of this important equine mart in such an out-of-the-way spot, it is surmised that once the place must have been the centre of a large district specially devoted to breeding horses; and possibly the fact that Lincolnshire is between Yorkshire and Norfolk, the homes of the coach horse and hackney, may have been another reason for the selection of Horncastle. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that at one time the little town could boast of the largest and best known horse fair in England, probably in the world. Nowadays, like all other old-fashioned functions of its kind in different parts of the country, the gathering both in importance and size is steadily on the decline. Modern facilities of travel and communication have brought buyer and seller so close together that these fairs are no longer the necessity they used to be in the time of our grandfathers. At the present day a breeder who produces horses of high quality has no difficulty in disposing

of his animals; half a dozen dealers are ready to snap up his young stock as soon as it is marketable, and he is saved the expense and loss of time entailed by a horse fair. Then again the immense growth in numbers and importance of the sale-yards or repositories all over the kingdom, where thousands of horses weekly change hands, must be a prominent factor in the gradual extinction of these long-established horse fairs. Everything is rush and hurry now. 'The old order changeth,' and the great horse fair of Horncastle, which at one time extended over a period of three weeks, is now practically reduced to three days; indeed, to be Irish, the best of the fair is actually over before it has really begun; for though the second Monday in August is the date fixed for the commencement, before that day has arrived most of the high-class animals will have changed hands, as will be explained further on.

The earliest record we have of this annual horse mart is a charter granted by Henry III. in the fifteenth year of his reign to Walter Mauclerke, Bishop of Carlisle, by which he was given authority to hold a fair beginning on the eve of St. Laurence and to continue for a space of seven days; though what the connection could have been between the reverend prelate and the horse fair the present writer cannot determine. But it is only natural that the great event of the year in the town should be dated to begin on the eve of St. Laurence, as that martyr (who suffered on the gridiron during the Roman persecution of Christians) is the patron saint of Horncastle. A device of the instrument of his torture and death is established as the arms of the town.

Doubtless as the gathering increased in size and popularity, it became necessary to extend the period of its duration, but though there seems to be no record of the date of the extension, there are men still living who recollect when three weeks was the recognised space of time. The first week seems to have been set apart for the sale of hunters and blood horses of exceptional quality; the second for hackneys and coach horses, for which the demand in those days, long before the advent of Puffing Billy, must have been enormous; the third week was devoted to cart-horses and low-priced stock. It is said that this custom of apportioning special days for different classes of animals was most rigidly enforced, and a seller who attempted to do business in the fair with farm horses during the hunter or hackney week would have found himself mobbed and ignominiously driven out.

The operation of moving horses to and from the fair must have

been a very different business from what it is nowadays with our special trains and fast expresses, when a horse-box can be whizzed across England in a few hours. Then it was a matter of days, sometimes weeks; for of course owners had to travel their animals by road, and except in the few cases where possibly highly valuable steeds were conveyed in padded horse-boxes drawn by straining teams, the journey was performed on foot. Coming from distant parts of the country, from Ireland, Wales and Scotland, this must

HIGH STREET DURING THE FAIR

have been no light undertaking, when it is remembered the absolute necessity that the stock should arrive at the fair in the pink of condition, free from signs of work and hardship. The task of travelling horses about the country was undertaken by a special class of men known as 'caddies,' who made their living from this kind of work, and by long experience were enabled to perform their lengthy journeys in the best possible manner for the comfort and condition of their charges. The most capable hands were well

known, and their services eagerly sought after. The following was the method of travelling horses. A hemp halter, without the nose-loop, was placed over the leading horse's head on to his shoulders, then the rope passing along his side was fastened firmly to the tail; horse number two was secured to the side rope, in such a position that he could not get either too far in front or behind. Number two wore a similar arrangement to the first, then number three was attached, and so on to the end of the line. The 'caddie' rode the leading horse, and the others followed in orderly array. At first sight this appears a very risky method of treating valuable horses, and probably if one were to string a lot of high-spirited, well-bred animals suddenly together and take

UNLOADING A SPECIAL

them along the roads an accident would happen; but doubtless these horses underwent some previous training and were broken to travel quietly ere their long journey to the fair began.

What a sight the old town must have presented during those three weeks! Every hostelry was full to overflowing, and every cottage took in lodgers; those were the days before the strict licensing laws which now govern the sale of intoxicants, and it was the custom here, as elsewhere in other parts of England during fair times, for numerous houses other than inns to advertise that beer was for sale within, by the simple expedient of hanging a green bush over the door. These were known as 'bough houses,' and from this old practice is probably derived the well-

known saying 'good wine needs no bush,' i.e. no advertisement. The busy townspeople reaped a rich harvest of guineas, and it is said the innkeeper who failed to make a clear profit during the fair of a sum amounting to at least his year's rent, would have thought himself ill favoured by the fickle goddess. Stabling was at a premium, every box and stall in the commodious yards was occupied; temporary erections, even canvas booths, were run up to meet the demand for equine shelter. Then it was customary for many of the private residents and tradespeople to let their stables; cart-houses and out-buildings of every description were transformed into accommodation for the annual invasion. Buyers and sellers arrived from all parts of the kingdom; the

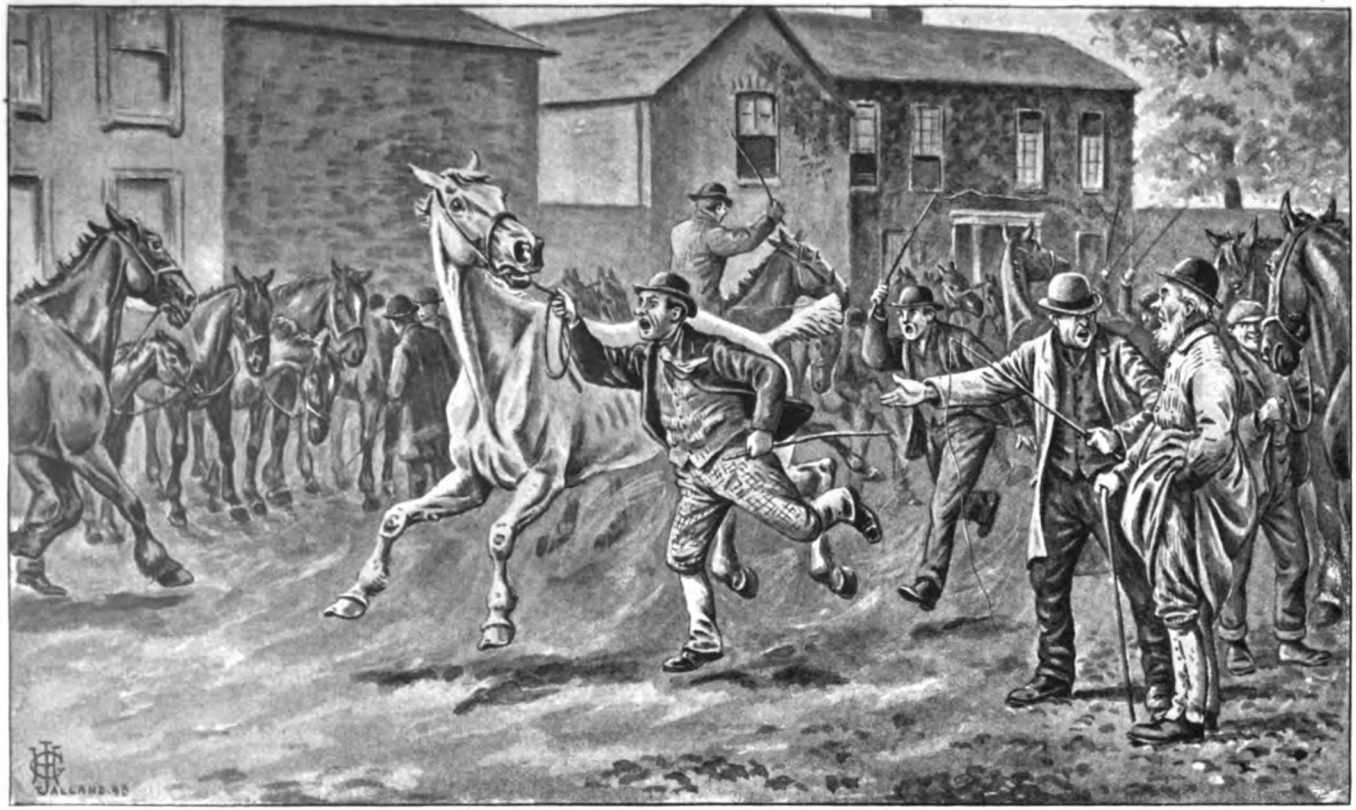
IN 'THE RODNEY' PADDOCK

Continent, and even America, sent many purchasers. Coaches, carts, gigs, and vehicles of all kinds poured into the little town, taxing its resources to the utmost. Droves of colts and ponies from distant Ireland and the mountains of Wales, long strings of horses of every kind going to and returning from the fair, thronged the approaches and crowded the narrow streets. A busy, bustling, shouting, whip-cracking, horse-perfumed scene it must have been; and it must be remembered that it went on day after day for three weeks. Now, alas for the innkeepers and others who profited by the prolongation, a single week almost suffices to see the first horse into the town and the last out. Year by year the fair appears to grow smaller and smaller, and

the business more quickly transacted; indeed, so far as the street portion of the event (once a great feature) is concerned, three days, or at most four, is the limit of its duration.

But however the fair may have deteriorated from its great importance, and particularly from the innkeeper's point of view, it may still be described as one of the largest of its kind in the kingdom, visited by thousands of horses and a corresponding number of buyers and sellers, grooms and stablemen. Numerous Continental dealers, also buyers for British and foreign Governments, are regular visitors, and all well-known English dealers and jobmasters are present, or are represented by their agents and touts. A large majority of the valuable horses now brought to this fair come from Ireland, and the greater part of these are hunters or young animals likely to make hunters. August being a convenient time of the year to purchase horses of this class accounts for the demand and the consequent supply; but custom alone can explain why Horncastle, which is difficult of access by rail, and quite off the great main lines, should continue to be selected as the meeting-place of buyers and sellers.

As previously mentioned, the fair is dated to start on the second Monday in August; but so early as the previous Wednesday, special trains from Fleetwood (the landing place of horses from Ireland) begin to arrive; doubtless the custom of bringing the animals thus early was to enable them to recover from their long journey before being offered for sale; but the dealers and other buyers, who vied with each other for first pick of the arrivals, started to come early too, and they now arrive almost as soon as the horses, with the consequent result that most of the superior stock are purchased before the fair proper has opened; indeed, the boats are met at Fleetwood by specially keen buyers, and a few animals never reach Horncastle at all. So the reader who may contemplate the acquisition of a first-class Irish hunter at the August fair must time his visit not later than the previous Friday or Saturday, lest he arrive to find that the best horses are disposed of. A large show of excellent nags may be found still for sale on the Monday, but the pick of the basket will then most probably be eating their oats in foreign stables. Though the gathering is of much lesser magnitude in these latter days, yet the best known stable-yards are always well filled, and it is necessary to engage stalls some time previously in order to secure good positions. In these immense yards all the high-class horses are to be found, and they present a busy scene during the early days of the fair. Here may be heard gesticulating buyers from



THE SALE OF A THIRTY-SHILLING CROCK

Paris chaffering with full-brogued sons of Erin; the dialects of a dozen different countries might be noted in as many minutes; horses are put through their paces with accompanying view-holloas and whip-crackings, galloped at racing speed out on to the highways to the danger of peaceful pedestrians, or jumped over fences erected for the purpose in adjacent paddocks. Many amusing incidents are to be witnessed, and the power of repartee possessed by the Irish dealers and their grooms is only to be equalled by that of the London cabby.

But to see the real 'fun of the fair' one should, on the Monday or Tuesday of the fair proper, walk from the Bull Ring down to the Boston Road. Only those of strong nerves should attempt the journey, for danger lurks on every side, the roadways are a surging mass of clattering horses, the footpaths are bordered by an unbroken line of menacing quarters and straw-plaited tails; copers, touts, and greasy rascals jostle your every step, whips flick past your nose or restive steeds obstruct the foot-way; sensitive ears must be deaf for the time being; the average coper's method of expression is decidedly more forcible than polite. Here will be seen long rows of magnificent shire horses, packed side by side as closely as they can stand. A large number of these animals are bred in the county, and the best go to swell the horse world of London and other large cities, being in great demand for brewers' drays and for work at railway yards. There may be noticed a quantity of short-legged cobby half-bred animals, likely to be purchased for bus and tram work or for delivery vans. Lower down the street will be found hundreds of horses of all classes, from the broken-down thoroughbred to the ancient and emaciated cart horse, ponies, donkeys and mules going to swell the concourse. Here are congregated the dealers in 'screws' and the gipsy element, who make more noise and get up greater excitement over the sale of a thirty-shilling crock than would suffice to sell a stable full of valuable horses. Poor old crocks, their whip-whealed bodies and woebegone expressions testify that the fair is anything but a pleasant break in the monotony of their hard lives! If the visitor should happen to notice a good-looking and apparently valuable animal amongst these sorry steeds, he should not be tempted to speculate; if he does, he is fairly certain to be 'had.' The horse would be sure to be either of an incurably vicious disposition, though rendered placid for the time being by the administration of drugs, or to possess some other disqualification which renders it practically valueless. Hardly a fair passes but some amusing rascality of this description is brought to light through the medium

of the police court, and it is safe to say that not a hundredth part of the successful swindles perpetrated are even heard of, much less punished.

Should a still more lively scene be desired by the venturesome visitor, he is recommended to wend his way further down the fair, when possibly the experience of being knocked off his feet by a wild and hairy pony will apprise him of the fact that he has arrived at the place where the droves of unbroken colts and ponies are stationed. Here is a pandemonium indeed, and one must be nimble to avoid disaster. Wild colts rush hither and thither with yelling men hanging on to their long halters, flags are waved and

HERE IS A PANDEMONIUM INDEED

banged against the sides of the terrified animals, rattling hats, cracking whips and loud shouting resound on every side, 'Sold again! Sold again!' yell the dealers. 'Fit to carry a nobleman' they exclaim, to the palpable flattery of the weedy long-tailed two-year-old they are showing off. 'Run on again! Hi, get out of the way! Harroo!' they shout. There's no 'By your leave' about their method—you have to jump aside or you are knocked down.

The men who handle these really wild colts appear to have absolutely no fear. On being told to halter a special animal they unhesitatingly spring on to the backs of the closely packed drove, and scramble across the surging crush until the colt required is

reached, when a halter is slipped over its head, and almost before you have time to think how it has been done, the animal is before you snorting and hanging back on the rope.

A few accidents usually happen during the fair, but how it is they are not of far more frequent occurrence is a mystery.

Until machinery has entirely abolished and exterminated the breed of horses, and we hunt on motor steeds, the Great Horse Fair will probably never entirely die out; but it is nevertheless certain that those who wish to witness this famous gathering before it is nothing but a dismal shadow of its former self should take an early opportunity.

HOW WE SAW KAIETEUR

BY EDWARD R. DAVSON

FAR away in the West, where the majestic Essequibo rolls down towards the Demerara coast, behind the sugar estates and Land of Mud, beyond even the scarce penetrable forest and pioneer gold placers of Guiana, there exists a sight, heard of by few Englishmen and seen as yet by but a score or so, which is not unworthy of being placed amongst the greatest wonders of the world.

As the dark Potaro river journeys from its source, the Ayangeanna Mountain, to seek a union with the broader Essequibo, it flows along the untrodden hinterland and descends through successive plateaux, until, ere yet it grows sedate and views the haunts of men, it gives one last, wild leap of over 820 feet to the plains below, and forms in doing so the noble Kaieteur Falls. Here day and night, and year by year, the mighty wave of water falls thundering in the wooded amphitheatre, dark and solid at the top, but flaking gradually down like countless feathery rockets, until it melts below into a sea of mist and foam; unseen, unheard, by man or beast it falls, save when the Nomad Indian pauses to gaze in superstitious reverence while moving to a better hunting ground, or when the savannah deer comes down

to drink his evening draught, fearful to linger, lest his natural foe, the jaguar, should spring from out of ambush at its prey.

It may not be without interest if I relate how three congenial spirits, the self-constituted representatives of three public schools, decided to make the journey into the interior; how we reached Kaieteur; how we came to unspeakable grief on the return journey, and how we returned to Georgetown sans clothes, sans food, sans guns, sans everything, except bush fever, which we got in quantities sufficient to make up for the loss of other and more desirable possessions.

There were the three of us—the Old Westminster, the Old Carthusian, and the Old Etonian—and with us went the great J. J., whose knowledge of matters zoological and botanical was only surpassed by his undying devotion to the fair sex.

J. J., who was appointed commander-in-chief of the expedition, brought with him his Portuguese satellite, De Freitas, who could skin bird or beast, cook, sew, or drink gin with equal ease and skill. On the morning of starting, he had not slept off the effects of his overnight's paiwarrie, and he had fallen through a glass case of tigers in the Georgetown Museum, to the horror of J. J., its guardian. His first appearance, therefore, was not prepossessing—his clothes matted with gore from the cuts of broken glass, a gin-and-water tone of voice and look of eye, and a billycock hat on the back of his head in which to explore the Guiana forest. Poor De Freitas! The fever he caught was not to be shaken off, and I only trust that in other spheres there may be found use for a bird-skinner, or else I fear his talents will not get their due reward.

POOR DE FREITAS!

Having laid in the amount of stores that we calculated would be necessary for us and our crew, for most of the journey was to be done by boat, we cast off from the Georgetown quay early one bright Friday morning (ill-omened day for a start) on the Demerara river steamer. We ploughed our way through the muddy water till the afternoon, by which time sugar cultivation and factories were left far behind, and the banks were only sparsely inhabited by black woodcutters and Bovianders, or half-breeds.

At Wismar, the Demerara station of the new little railway which had just been built, chiefly to open out the Potaro gold fields, we landed and travelled through eighteen miles of sand

and forest to Rockstone, on the Essequibo river. A loquacious gold-digger enlivened the journey by giving us his views on the gold prospects of the colony, and told us with enthusiasm of the pile he intended making on the trip. His hopes, poor man, were not destined to be realised, for I hear that he returned to Georgetown after a month or two only to succumb to malaria in a couple of days.

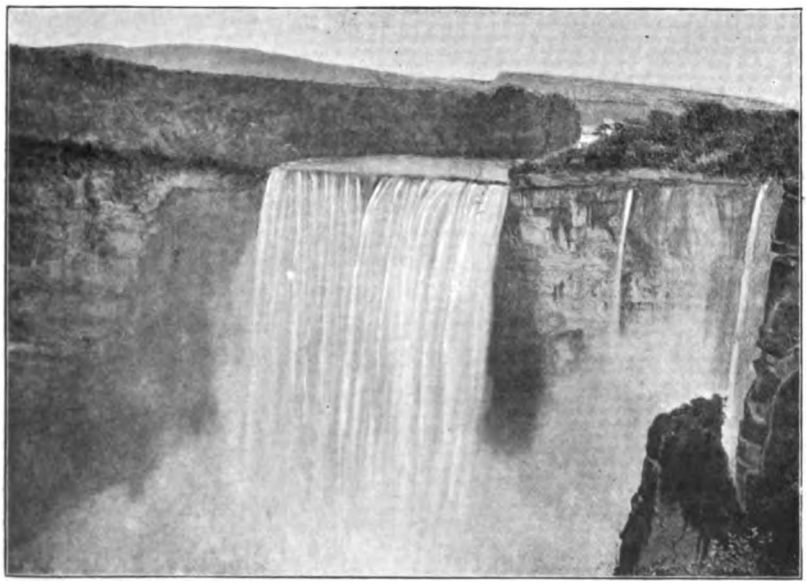
We stayed the night at the newly erected Rockstone Hotel, and were astir early next morning loading up our bateau and engaging our men. We could only obtain six, but as we were assured we could complete the crew at Omai, a gold mine on the river bank at which we were to spend the night, and as a steam launch had been placed at our disposal to tow us up so far, we did not trouble much about the matter. It was not, however, till noon that the launch could get up steam and enable us to shove off from the busy landing place with its gold boats, kegs of pork, and crews of voluble blacks.

All went well for the first half-mile, when the launch proceeded to run aground, and the captain, quietly remarking that he never expected to get much farther, turned about and steamed back to Rockstone. As we had delayed our departure for four hours to enable the launch to get up steam, and as we had only six men instead of twelve, we were justly annoyed. The inevitable result was that we should take two days to get to Omai, and have to encamp on the river bank on the Saturday night. Another difficulty that arose was that our dusky crew objected to work on Sunday, and we therefore stood a good chance of wasting another day; nor was it until after a long discussion that J. J.'s eloquence and the promise of an extra 'snap' overcame their scruples.

The captain, who in appearance might have been the original of Rubens' 'Tête de Nègre' in the Musée at Brussels, told us that the last time he had worked on Sunday the boat had got upset and smashed, while the time before one of the crew had been killed, but we assured him that nothing of the kind would happen on this trip, and he finally gave in. I will defy anyone to persuade that crew to break the Sabbath again after their third experience!

On Sunday we paddled from early morn till dewy eve, and from dewy eve till midnight, in order to 'meet' Omai, as the captain put it, and we all had to take our turn at the paddles to get there even then. We slung our hammocks in the wooden watch-house at the water's edge, but were up at daybreak to try to get some more men and make up for lost time.

Once more luck was against us, several of the Omai men had deserted, and we could only be spared two; but at Tumatumari, a further two days' journey (it could be done in one with a full crew) up the Essequibo, and then up the tributary Potaro, we were told we should be able to get some Indians. This was poor consolation, but there was no help for it, and off we went once more, stripped to the waist, nay, even clad in unceremonious bathing-drawers, paddling all day except a rest at noon for a swim and breakfast. We encamped at the junction of the rivers



KAIETEUR

on the Monday evening, and early the next afternoon reached Tumatumari.

The journey so far could only be described as distinctly monotonous, as the scenery consisted solely of forest, the trees, entwined with a network of parasites and covered with orchids and other epiphytes, growing right down to the water's edge. There was little sign of animal or bird life, while a scorching sun and the cramped position that had to be maintained in the boat were trying to the most equable of tempers.

The only excitement was the occasional sighting of gold boats, sometimes with twenty paddlers singing rhythmically on their homeward journey to Georgetown and rum-shops; while our men

beguiled the tedium of the way by singing quaint chanties, the captain intoning one line and the crew taking up the next in a harmonious refrain—a sort of *strophe* and *antistrophe* of ancient drama. The effect was, however, rather depressing, and when they ceased we treated them to a few efforts of our own. All airs had, of course, to be sung in time with the paddles, and we found that 'The Eton boating song,' 'Art thou weary, art thou languid,' and 'Come where the booze is cheaper' seemed to fit in best.

Our honest efforts naturally made us relish the tinned delicacies of the evening, and when we sat round the camp fire or lay in our hammocks, and the smoke of our pipes curled up towards the stars, and no sound broke the solemn hush of the great forest around, we felt that our reward was full and sufficient.

At Tumatumari we enjoyed the hospitality of Nicholson, the gold officer, who was very bad with fever, until the next (Wednesday) morning. The incursion of numerous guests did not put the household about much, as the simple act of slinging hammocks in the open gallery created spare bedrooms innumerable, while the river at the foot of the garden afforded a large and refreshing washstand. The house commands a beautiful view of wooded hills all round, with the Potaro winding in and out and roaring down in the foreground over the rocks in the formidable Tumatumari rapids.

As our boat could not be portaged up without great delay, we had to requisition a smaller one above to take us on. At the same time we overhauled the commissariat, and selected only what would be enough to last us till our return there.

We also got four Indians of the Macousi tribe, by name George, Ben, Jimmy, and James, to complete our crew. The latter was a precocious youth, who afforded us much amusement, and whose greatest delight was to gaze at and chuckle over the substantial proportions of the Old Carthusian. George, knowing the upper river well, took over the duties of steersman, and consequently wore trousers as a mark of his high office. The others, however, contented themselves with 'a little bit of string' round their waists. George also spoke a little English, but the rest showed their feelings by monosyllabic grunts of joy or sorrow.

We had now reached what a previous traveller has called 'the gates of fairyland,' and the scenery was certainly beautiful, but there was very little game, and, save when we were potting

alligators, a sport that soon palls on one, or shooting parrots, our gun cases were rarely opened. Fresh meat was, therefore, rather an unusual item in our evening menu.

That evening we came up to the store and gold camp of Potaro Landing, and, paddling together in the most approved style, we woke the echoes of the surrounding hills with 'Glory, glory, hallelujah,' bringing all the men to their cabin doors to give us a cheer in passing. The blacks were by this time getting quite good at 'The Eton boating song,' and I dare say it has ere now taken its place as one of their recognised chanties, but the Indians held aloof and paddled in disdainful silence.

BEGAN TO SMILE WINNINGLY AT A GRACEFUL MAIDEN

Next day we came to a big sweep of the river, with the Maratu and Pakatu rapids at the elbow. This necessitated a long portage overland of the baggage; in fact, we slept the night half way across at the German Syndicate Gold Mine, while J. J. and some of the men dragged, pulled, and lifted the bateau over the various series of rocks to the higher water.

We had a long walk next day by an Indian trail through the forest to rejoin him. The rain came down in torrents, and the packages grew exceedingly heavy, and our pyjamas grew the same with the soaking they received. Then the Indian who was guiding us pushed on too fast, and some of the party lost their way, and everybody started looking for everybody else, and the track became obliterated and the forest became a swamp. Altogether we were not very amiable when we finally emerged at the riverside to find J. J. had not arrived.

However, a hunting party of Macousis had encamped there, and we speedily became great friends. The Old Etonian insisted on shaking hands all round at regular intervals of five minutes, at which the tattooed warriors showed much gratification, and the Old Carthusian gave them all nips of neat gin, which gratified them even more. It was only when the Old Westminster began

to smile winningly at a graceful maiden clad in long black hair that they hastily struck camp and disappeared silently into the undergrowth, the women carrying all the household gods on their backs.

The prospect did not improve even when J. J. hove in sight. We had great difficulty in getting the wet tarpaulin slung up, and then the ground below was as soaking as the air above, and we could get no dry wood to kindle a fire, and the whisky had given out; so we rolled ourselves sadly in moist blankets and lay and shivered till dawn. Saturday morning fortunately proved to be fine, so we got our clothes dried, and by evening we 'met' the foot of Amatu Falls. Here we proceeded to erect a most respectable and elaborate camp, as we had to spend more than one night in it.

We had not intended to ask our men to work on another Sunday, but it was necessary to get the boat up the falls, and this job, although only a morning's work, turned out to be as stiff as any we had yet gone through. We were all up to our shoulders in the stream, and frequently swept off our feet. Some stood at the top of each fall, and with ropes hauled the boat sheer up the face of the rocks, while others strove below to guide it and save it from being stove in.

Some of our men were by this time suffering from fever, dysentery, or ague, and J. J.'s medicine chest was in frequent requisition, but that the illnesses were not all due to the evil climate the following example will show.

We used sometimes to throw a dynamite cartridge into the tannin-coloured water in order to get fresh fish. One evening we exploded one in a quiet bay and gathered up about a dozen perai. The Indian, James, then dived in and produced sixty-five of all shapes and sizes, whereupon the four redskins erected a barbecue over their fire, and roasting sixty, devoured them all for supper. The natural result was that there was woe in the Indian camp next morning, and much placing of hands on the lower chest and groaning. Poor Jimmy was very bad, and nearly died, but we kept him alive with chlorodyne. He, however, became a 'sitter' for the rest of the way, and did not do another stroke of work till he got back to Tumatumari.

The next afternoon we caught our first glimpse of Kaieteur, far away through a break in the surrounding hills, looking in the distance like a patch of snow on a bank of green, or, as the Carthusian put it, like a chalk mark on a billiard cloth. That evening we ran into a bay at Takuit, the farthest point of our

water journey, as the river, for the three miles beyond this, was one series of cataracts up to the great fall itself.

Scarcely had we made our camp when we saw clouds of insects coming across the river, and soon we were in the midst of a swarm of flying ants. In vain we muffled our heads and lit innumerable fires; they settled on to everything and dropped down our backs, and De Freitas announced he could not cook the dinner, as they swarmed into the pot whenever he lifted the lid. They had an unpleasant way, too, of shedding their wings as they alighted, and remaining as simple and playful caterpillars. We began to fear we should have to go dinnerless, when just as darkness settled down, they all seemed to disappear as they had come, leaving behind myriads of wings and creepy bodies, which continued to wriggle about us throughout the night.

At dawn the roaring of baboons in the forest awoke us, and doing up some necessaries in light packages for the blacks to carry on their heads (for we intended to sleep at the top of the falls), we started off on our long and arduous climb. We had to skirt the back of a forest-clad mountain and follow a circuitous Indian path. It was stiff going, and in places we had to use hands and feet, sometimes cutting our way through the network of bush-ropes and creepers. The air was like a Turkish bath, and the heavy silence was only broken by the gong-like 'kóng-kày' of the bell-bird, or campanero.

In course of time the wood grew gradually lighter, until we finally emerged on the sandstone conglomerate of the Kaieteur tableland.

What a place for a botanist! On the rocky soil bromeliads, lilies, sobralias, cattleyas, and other orchids grew in the wildest profusion amongst the many ferns and gorgeous plants, most of them rare and many unknown. It seemed strange that they could flourish on the burning rock, but we found that some, especially the bromeliads, had natural cups at the petioles, which caught the ever-drifting vapour, and so stored up for the plant sometimes several quarts of water.

Nor is it to the botanist alone that this region opens out a fairyland of research, for scientists of every kind, who may care to give the time and trouble, will find a full reward in the unearthing of still more of Nature's secrets. For the zoologist there are new species of bird, beast, and insect which are not yet known or classified; for the archæologist there are the strange Timehri rocks, with their graven hieroglyphics, supplying perhaps a link with the East, and the remains of ancient villages, con-

taining the relics of now vanished Indian tribes; finally, for the simple lover of Nature, there are the beauties of a land of unrivalled waterfalls, where the planets are visible in daytime, and where the mystic mount Roraima rises sheer up towards the sky, holding its creatures cut off since the creation from the outer world, and suggesting the location of the Devil-tree of Eldorado. To those who cry 'There is nothing new under the sun,' one can only respond, 'Go, travel on the savannahs of Guiana.'

A short walk brought us to the edge of the plateau basin, and there, almost directly facing us, burst upon our sight the Kaieteur Falls in all their grandeur. Down the mighty wave swept in a snowy curtain to the dark abyss below, while the sun, catching the cloud of mist in front, cast a rainbow arc around it. Myriad flights of white-throated swifts, a unique species, swept over the face of the water, and shooting down with incredible velocity, they twisted round and cut into the gloomy caverns behind.

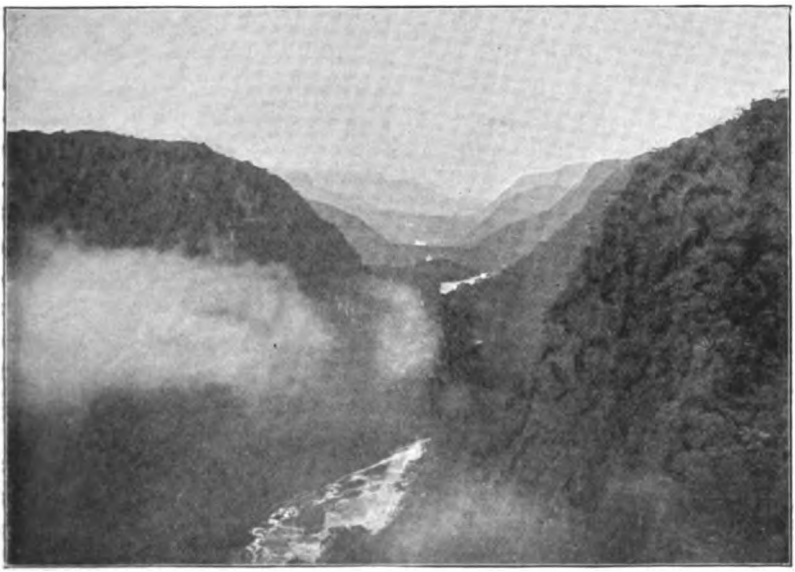
WILDLY SHOUTED 'KAIETEUR!'

We gazed at the sight in speechless admiration, for no words could express the awed sensation. The blacks, on the other hand, threw their hats in the air and wildly shouted 'Kaieteur! Kaieteur!'

And then at length we turned and made our way round till we stood beside the falls themselves, and gazed away down into the deep ravine in front, with the dark Potaro winding in and out among the forest-clad hills, looking in the distance like a tiny babbling brook.

Gradually the sun sank low and tinged the scene with the deep mellow colour of a Rembrandt picture. Then the short twilight gave place to night, and the moon rose up and clothed the landscape with a ghostly and fantastic garb, while the camp fire flared up a few yards from the fall like an evil spirit disturbing a scene of peace and solitude. There was little talk in camp that

night, as we all felt overpowered by strange and novel feelings, but it was long ere we could tear ourselves away from the fascination of gazing down into the inky depths below. At last we sought our hammocks, and the fire died down and the thunder of the water seemed to grow more soft and soothing, until—we awoke, shivering and drenched at daylight. A thick wet fog clung all around us, while the unceasing drops pattered down on the tarpaulin. We turned out and bemoaned our luck at getting a wet day. But no, it was only the clouds of mist which accumulated during



VIEW LOOKING FROM KAIETEUR

the night and soaked us through, nor was it till after several hours that the sun dispersed them and they rolled away down the valley.

The name 'Kaieteur' signifies in the Indian 'Old Man's Fall,' and as the legend regarding it is rather quaint, I give it in the words of Barrington Brown, the discoverer of the falls in 1870:—

'Once upon a time, there lived an old Indian at a village above the falls, an exceedingly feeble old man, whose feet became infested with chigoes to such an extent, that he gave his friends and relatives an immense amount of trouble in picking them out for him every morning. So they determined to rid themselves of the nuisance, and accordingly placed the old man in a woodskin, just above the edge of the fall, and shoved it out into the stream.

The strong current hurried him to the brink and swept him over its foaming water, and he was seen no more.' Needless to say the old man's spirit haunts the fall, while a long slab of rock at the foot and a square rock at the right-hand side are pointed out as being the woodskin and canister, thus affording ocular demonstration of the truth of the legend.

All that morning we explored the neighbourhood with gun, net, and spade, and were rewarded with a fair collection of orchids, birds, and butterflies.

In the afternoon we packed up again, and with a last lingering look of farewell we left Kaieteur once more to a solitude which has not since been broken by white man's presence.

Next morning we headed for our old camp at Amatu amid heavy rain. The Waratu rapids were shot like a streak of lightning, the boat plunging down nose on, as if it would never rise again, while two furrows of foam poured in over the stern. But after a few convulsive leaps, she suddenly shot out into the quiet waters beyond, and we baled the water from the boat with, it must be confessed, rather a sense of relief. Lowering the boat down Amatu by rope was almost as hard a task as hauling her up, but we managed it successfully, and also portaged the baggage through to our old camp before turning in. The rainy season seemed now to have commenced in earnest, and we had a wet night and start the following day.

At breakfast time, however, the sun shone out, so we opened our canisters on the rocks above the Pakatu Falls, and once more got our mildewed garments dried, the Old Westminster, who had by this time a flowing beard, seizing the opportunity of stropping his razor.

After packing up everything, even to the clothes we were wearing (for we were to spend the afternoon in the water), we began to descend the cataract. It was a big job, and as all the portaging had to be done over large and pointed rocks, it was not till after sunset that the boat floated at the foot. Only one little rapid remained, and as the thunder clouds were rolling up again, we made haste to load up the bateau and send it round a point of rocks to where we sought to make our camp. 'Let us walk across the rocks,' said J. J. to us three; 'it will lighten the boat so much.'

Out she went into mid-stream, the current swept her on. Suddenly, up went the bow, the foam sprang over the boat, and in the gathering gloom, while the rain poured down and the lightning played with intermittent flash, four horrified men, with feelings indescribable and in most solemn silence, watched human

eads and precious baggage whirled down the stream until they anished in the twilight from our view. The relief was great hen we found that the boat was comparatively sound, and after ome time we got it off the rock. Then two of us put off to ollect what we could f baggage and crew, he latter being found utching on to casual ocks for a quarter of mile down stream, hile the other two ade for the bank, and the dark collected odden boughs of trees, nd with three precious ucifers coaxed them nto flame.

WRINGING OUT THE WET AND WAITING FOR THE DAWN

At last the boat eturned and then we umbered off. All were resent except one. We olloaed loudly in the ight, and to our inexressible relief there as an answering nout, and presently the man broke through the undergrowth.

But what of the baggage? Where were our lately dried lothes? Where was the newly sharpened razor? Echo answered Where! The salvage consisted of half a flask of whisky nd water, three sticks of chocolate in a vermilion-painted paper, hich combined with them to form a pulp that had a truly novel avour, the Carthusian's trousers, a copy of 'The Green Carnation,' nd a tin canister with a few soaking and useless birdskins. Many feet below the surface lay our double-barrelled guns, four undred cartridges, all our provisions, and our own and the rew's canisters of clothes. It was just dinner-time, too! We rained the drops of the precious whisky *pani*, and tried to wallow the painted chocolate paste; and then we spent the ight, a truly miserable crew, wringing out the wet and waiting or the dawn. We were a scantily, nay, indecently, clad lot that umbled on board at daybreak in the hopes of finding something lse. Vain hope! The river had risen three feet in the night, nd, though our men dived valiantly, nothing came to light.

I know not what the future of Kaieteur may be, nor dare I

prophesy that we shall ever see a railway from Rockstone to the falls carrying its cosmopolitan freight of tourists to where the hydraulic lift may bear them to the Grand Hotel above; but this I do know—that if some intrepid explorer at any future date should seek out the haunts of wild and tattooed redskins, and find them clad in *khaki* suits, smoking briar pipes, and using Purdey's latest ejectors, I might perhaps be able to throw some light on this unnatural development of civilisation.

We shot the Maratu rapids safely, and went down stream all the morning until we judged ourselves opposite the German Syndicate Gold Mine. Then we struck in, and on reaching it the hospitable manager gave us our first food for twenty-four hours.

That night, by dint of unparalleled paddling in heavy rain, we reached Tumatumari, where the Carthusian developed fever, and where the Etonian, after one glance of horror in the glass, borrowed Nicholson's razor, and removed a ragged and uneven beard. The razor is now used for cutting cassava, and Nicholson has taken to going unshaved.

THE ETONIAN, AFTER ONE GLANCE OF HORROR IN THE GLASS

Little more remains to be told. We borrowed provisions to take us down, and bought some half-a-crown trousers at Potaro store. The Carthusian had rather a poor time till we got to Rockstone, as a high fever does not fit one for sitting cramped in a boat for over twelve hours a day. At Rockstone we parted from our crew, after renewing their wardrobes for them, and on arrival at Georgetown we took a cab, and, after putting the Carthusian to bed, went and bought costly raiment, regardless of expense. Next day the Etonian followed suit and developed fever, but the Old Westminster reserved himself until when we got on board the homeward steamer, when he made ample amends for the delay.

Our sedate friends at the coast rebuked our rashness for venturing on the trip at the beginning of the rains, but we bore the lectures philosophically and did not repent. For although we had suffered some misfortunes, and although the rare plants and birds, which we had hoped might bear our names in circles scientific, were buried in Potaro's depths, yet we felt that the reward atoned for any discomforts we had endured. We had not died of fever, and we had seen Kaieteur.

NEW LIGHT ON THE SALMON

BY THE RIGHT HON. SIR HERBERT MAXWELL, BART., M.P.

THERE is hardly any source to which an angler would turn with less hope of deriving from it light upon the mysteries of his craft than a Parliamentary Blue Book; nevertheless, there has lately been issued, among the volumes 'presented to Parliament by command of Her Majesty,' the report on certain investigations conducted in the Research Laboratory of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, containing matter worthy of the close attention of every salmon fisher. The whole report is one of the first moment to the science of natural history, but it is that part of it which explains the singular changes affecting the minute structure of the stomach and digestive tract of the salmon, during its sojourn in fresh water, which will have most interest for sportsmen. It appears to be calculated to lay to rest a question which has been keenly discussed by anglers for a long time.

This question is briefly, 'Do salmon feed in fresh water?' a question which many good and practical anglers have answered emphatically in the affirmative; while others, fewer in number, though, perhaps, equally good and practical, and more observant of the habits of wild animals, have answered less emphatically in the negative.

Let me quote from two writers who are among the latest, the most competent, and, it may be added, the most temperate of those who have examined this problem. First comes the Hon. A. Gathorne-Hardy, who, in his charming little volume on 'The Salmon' in the 'Fur, Feather, and Fin' series, writes as follows:

'It has been frequently contended that salmon do not feed at

all in fresh water, and a recent author states dogmatically that it is impossible that they could feed in the rivers, as, if they did, they would destroy everything in them. This seems to me to be an extravagant proposition. It is possible to feed without making it the main business of life; and it would seem that grilse and salmon, during their fresh-water stage of existence, "take the goods the gods provide them," without going out of their way to search for nourishment. . . . Setting aside, for the moment, the well-authenticated instances of food being discovered in the stomachs of salmon taken in fresh water, I should have thought that the experience of the angler was conclusive on this subject. . . . Surely the fact that salmon are often caught with worms, minnows, dace, prawns, and such natural baits is proof positive that he is not averse to an occasional relish' (p. 10).

Now hear the other side. We will cite Mr. Abel Chapman, who is accused by Mr. Gathorne-Hardy of writing 'dogmatically.' Dogmatic or not, Mr. Chapman has too good a reputation for accurate and searching observation of natural history to be lightly dismissed. Here is the conclusion he has arrived at:

'Salmon do not require to feed in fresh water. They may, and do, from sheer idleness, mischief, or curiosity, or possibly to keep the digestive organs in working order, snatch at and swallow some darting creature or living object they may chance to see passing by or overhead. But that is not feeding; they do not feed in the sense of nourishing their bodies. What nourishment they need during their sojourn in rivers is derived from the abundant reserve of fat or "curd" with which high living at sea has interlarded the flakes and overlaid the flanks of a new-run salmon. If there are those who still hold that salmon "feed" while in fresh water, let them consider what the hypothesis involves. Salmon ascend favourite streams in shoals[1]; they are by nature rapacious and voracious. . . . What is there in any river to satisfy hundreds of such appetites? . . . . A single week's ravages would clear out every living thing in the water . . . . every trout, smolt, and eel, every duck, moor-hen, and water-rat would speedily be swept up; in a week, small boys would hardly be safe' ('Wild Norway,' p. 50).

Thus these two doctors, stoutly disagreeing, and each claiming his as the only rational view. Meantime, other doctors have been

[1] The present depleted state of our salmon rivers affords no criterion of the numbers that would naturally frequent them. To realise that, one must consider the normal salmon population of rivers on the west coast of North America, which has not been reduced by nets, by dams, and by pollution.

quietly at work with scalpel and microscope, bent on discovering whether salmon *could* feed in fresh water if they *would*, or whether they do not feed there for a parallel reason to that which prevents cherubs sitting down—*parce qu'il n'y a pas de quoi.* Scientific men already entertained doubts on this point, not as to the presence of suitable food in the rivers frequented by salmon, but as to the capacity of the salmon while in fresh water to digest any food that might come his way. So long ago as 1880, Professor Miescher-Ruesch recorded some remarkable observations on the physiology of salmon taken in the Rhine during eight preceding years. He endorsed the opinion of Glaser, Barfurth and His, that 'salmon take no food from the time they leave the sea until after they have spawned, and seldom after this.' He failed to find any trace of food in any unspawned fish,[1] and in only one kelt did he find some in a semi-digested state. Further, he found that the mucus occurring in the stomach of these unspawned river salmon was in no instance acid in reaction, and that no active digestive ferment was secreted. The stomach of one kelt, however, contained a thin secretion, yielding an acid reaction, in other words, possessing peptic activity. He drew attention to certain remarkable progressive changes in the appearance of the stomach, which, when the salmon is at sea, is a capacious elastic sac, but when the fish enters fresh water, gradually contracts and becomes wrinkled, until ultimately the passage through it closes entirely.

The Edinburgh experts, following in the footsteps of the German investigators, began their observations in June 1895 on salmon taken from the Tweed and other rivers on the east coast of Scotland, and the Annan on the west coast. Miescher-Ruesch's observations were verified, and precisely the same phenomena noted in the stomachs of Scottish salmon as he had recorded in those of the Rhine. It would be out of place to describe in these pages the highly technical process by which this independent examination was performed; naturalists and anglers are recommended to study for themselves the Blue Book in which they are detailed.[2] It is enough here to record the very remarkable finding to which their investigations have brought the learned gentlemen who entered on and conducted them in that impartial spirit which is essential to all scientific inquiry. Here, then, is

[1] Mr. Gathorne-Hardy, in the extract from his book above quoted, refers to 'well-authenticated' instances of food found in the stomachs of salmon taken in fresh water. It is to be regretted he did not cite them; allegations there have been in plenty, but where is the authenticity?

[2] *Report of Investigation into the Life History of Salmon.* Glasgow: printed for Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1898. Price 1*s.* 11*d.*

the summary of their opinion on the vexed question—Do salmon feed in fresh water?

'Much depends on what is meant by the word "feeding." By *feeding* we mean here not the mere swallowing of material, but the digestion, absorption, and utilisation of that material by the body. That salmon take the fly, minnow, or other shining object in the mouth is no argument as to their feeding in that sense. That they may, and occasionally do, take and swallow worms and other wriggling objects is well known. But the swallowing of a few worms can do but little to make good the enormous changes going on in the fish, even if when swallowed they are digested and used.'

They then go on to summarise the evidence on which their conclusion is based. Salmon leaving the sea, it is pointed out, are in a condition of accumulated nourishment, enough not only to supply material for the growth of the ovary and testes, but to furnish energy for the work of ascending a river. This work, it must be remembered, is not continuous. Twenty-four hours of travel may be followed by weeks of inaction; the expenditure of energy and consumption of tissue by a cold-blooded animal resting at the bottom of the river must be exceedingly small and slow. Nevertheless, important changes are progressing steadily in the fish while it rests in fresh water. The material accumulated in the muscles diminishes by transference to the organ of reproduction, and there is 'absolutely no indication that its loss is made good by fresh material taken as food.' Anglers are aware how much more rapidly this muscular deterioration proceeds as the season advances. Winter-running fish entering the rivers in December and January exhibit hardly any deterioration in quality of flesh for many weeks. Their sea jackets become slightly tarnished, owing, probably, not to the oxidising effect of fresh water, but to some modification of the circulation. But towards autumn the changes internally and externally proceed very rapidly.

Most important of all, however, in relation to the question of salmon feeding in fresh water are the changes which take place in the stomach and digestive tract. Miescher-Ruesch had noted the alteration in these visible to the naked eye; it remained for the Edinburgh savants to submit them, for the first time in recent years, to microscopic examination. This revealed that in every case the degeneration of the general muscles of the body had been accompanied by 'desquamative catarrh' of the epithelial cells which are essential to digestion; in other words, these cells became

degenerated, detached, and functionless. They are shed, in short, and become as useless to the fish as moulted plumes are to a bird.

Now it is not suggested that this is the result of the change from salt water to fresh. It would be very startling if this were so, because it is now generally acknowledged that the salmon is a native of fresh water visiting the sea, not a pelagic animal wandering up the rivers. Moreover, it has been ascertained beyond any doubt that this peculiar catarrh, affecting the internal organs and destroying their functions, begins while the fish are still in the sea. *They enter the river incapacitated for the assimilation of food*, and by the time they reach the upper waters the whole digestive tract is in a state of catarrh. This degeneration rendering the stomach functionless and incapable of dealing with any food that may be swallowed, is the result of the change in circulation caused by the blood-flow becoming concentrated upon the reproductive organs. The shedding of the epithelial cells must destroy the last traces of appetite for food, which, indeed, probably almost disappears before the salmon leaves his feeding grounds in the deep sea.

'The very low digestive power of extracts of the mucous membrane of the stomach and intestine, not only in fish from the upper reaches, in which the degenerative changes above referred to have occurred, but in fish coming to the mouth of the river, and with the lining membrane still intact, seems to indicate that the salmon has practically ceased to feed before it makes for the river mouth.'

It is commonly believed among anglers and fishermen, as accounting for the invariable emptiness of a salmon's stomach, that this fish has the power of ejecting food when threatened with capture; but the true significance of the absence of all organic remains in the intestines has hitherto been overlooked. The Edinburgh doctors examined 104 fish in their laboratory during 1896 and the spring of 1897 without detecting a single trace of food either in the stomach or intestines. The condition of the stomachs rendered the hypothesis of rapid digestion untenable, and all the symptoms, microscopic, chemical, and otherwise, pointed to a prolonged fast. Unscientific people boggle over believing in any vertebrate animal maintaining a fast for months at a time, but it is well known that the male fur seal, after coming to land in the rutting season, feeds no more until he returns to the ocean, sometimes more than three months after he left it. All this time he has been engaged in furious encounters with other males, as well as paying the exhausting attentions

expected by his mate. All vertebrate animals exhibit fixed periods of fasting and abstinence, long or short. Human beings find it easier to conform to civilised requirements by taking their nourishment at fixed and frequent intervals, instead of grazing most of the day like a horse, or incessantly pecking like a canary, or concentrating their appetite for a single daily gorging, like a tiger or a buzzard. Salmon, on the other hand, being merely trout which have acquired the habit of repairing to the sea for food they cannot find in their native streams, transact all their feeding in, say, six months; having done so, and crammed their systems with nourishment, appetite fails, and they return *home* for shelter and matrimonial business. Outside the order of vertebrates, one has only to compare the ceaseless voracity of the caterpillar with the prolonged quiescence and abstinence of the chrysalis, to perceive how energy can be stored in the system and paid out by degrees, how sharply existence may be separated into long periods of nutrition and reproduction.

'We have thus,' runs the final verdict of the gentleman whose report is under consideration, 'no hesitation in confirming the conclusions of Miescher-Ruesch, that the salmon, at least before spawning, does not feed during its sojourn in fresh water.'

Of course, this may fail to convince men who have seen salmon 'on the feed' on March browns. Undoubtedly salmon, both fresh run and foul, do amuse themselves by pursuing, capturing, perhaps swallowing, these flies when they appear in numbers on the surface. It does not of necessity follow that, because appetite and the power of digestion have failed, the fish have lost also the faculty of perceiving flavours in the mouth, and it is certain that they retain their predatory and destructive instincts, which become active at irregular periods. An experienced friend of mine, on whose accuracy of observation I can rely, told me recently that, standing on a bridge (over the Tummel, I think), he saw a number of kelts lying in the pool below. Happening to have some flat, white sugar-plums in his pocket, he flipped one into the water above the fish. One of them sailing up seized it as it was twirling down to the bottom, and presently expelled it; and this process was repeated several times on successive sweetmeats. No doubt salmon in a river, when not slumbering, will dart at and seize any object that arouses their curiosity or destructive instinct. We jump to the conclusion that, because they seize it in the mouth, they mean to eat it, forgetting that the mouth is their only prehensile organ. It is quite possible that some of us may have seen a young lady sitting

between luncheon and dinner with a novel in her hand—her proper prehensile organ—and, in one sense, we should be right in saying that she was 'devouring' the book. But we should err in affirming that men fed on pipes or lady's-maids on pins, merely because they are often to be seen with these objects in their mouths. The idea that a few dozen March browns can have any appreciable effect on the frame of a twenty-pound salmon, even if his stomach were in trim to deal with them, surely has only to be expressed to be dismissed.

More puzzling will be found the opinion founded on these observations that kelts do not feed much in fresh water. The common impression is that kelts are as ravenous as pike, and their destruction has frequently been advocated by reason of the mischief they are supposed to work among fry and smolts. But the experiments go to prove that this rests on a misconception. Food has very rarely been found in the stomachs or intestines of kelts. The question that will spring to the lips of every practical salmon-fisher is—How, then, do you account for 'well-mended kelts'? Kelts of both sexes quit the spawning beds in an extremely emaciated condition, retaining the characteristic discoloration of kippers and baggits. During their lingering descent to the sea they regain much of their activity and resume their silvery coats, while the quality and outline of the muscles improve in a marked degree. How can these changes take place if the fish does not feed in the sense of taking nourishment? The answer is equally curious and conclusive. In the first place it must be admitted that the stomach certainly begins to revive directly the spawn is shed. It has been proved that before the fish reaches the sea the epithelial cells on the lining membrane, which before spawning have been destroyed and shed, are completely regenerated, and the gall bladder is once more distended, showing that the liver is getting ready to resume its bile-forming function. This means the revival of appetite, and the fish, obeying hereditary instincts, repairs to the sea, where alone there is enough provender to satisfy it. A kelt, therefore, that chose to remain in the barren reaches of a Highland river might maintain a precarious existence, but would be far more likely to starve. It would require millions of March browns to replace the flakey curd, the storage of energy, which have been parted with in the prodigious effort of spawning.

Nature, however, has made provision of a very peculiar kind for sustaining the life, and even, in a considerable degree, restoring the energy, of the descending kelt. It is twofold. First,

nearly always the ovary retains some of the ova after the act of spawning—sometimes more, sometimes fewer. These ova are now re-absorbed into the system, restoring to it that proportion of nutritive material with which it had parted in their formation. The better-mended kelts, therefore, are probably those which retained most ova after spawning. Second, the vessels which concentrated the blood stream upon the ovaries during the period of their development are closed after spawning by vascular contraction. 'The salmon,' to quote Miescher-Reusch, 'is like a patient whose leg has been amputated after the application of an Esmarch's bandage. Its blood courses in a narrow circulation, therefore with higher pressure, and supplies a less amount of oxygen-requiring matter than formerly. The circulation is again sufficient for its task, and the trunk muscles become normal. . . . The little nutrient matter coming from the ovary greatly helps the reconvalescence of the muscle.'

Let us now summarise the finding of the jury upon this particular part of the case submitted to them.

1. Salmon, a fresh-water fish, repairs to the sea for food supply.
2. During the pelagic sojourn, it lays up sufficient store of nutriment and energy to maintain existence in the river until the effort of reproduction is accomplished.
3. While it remains in fresh water, previous to spawning, the salmon is incapable of taking nourishment, owing to structural and chemical changes in the digestive tract.
4. After spawning, regeneration of the stomach is brought about by restoration of the circulation to its normal course.
5. Kelts recover the use of their stomachs before reaching the sea, but do not habitually feed in fresh water. They return to the sea directly the condition of their stomachs causes a revival of appetite.
6. They improve in condition after spawning, not by means of food swallowed, but by re-absorption of unshed ova and restoration of the circulation to a normal state.

Now to what does all this amount in the calculations of him who aspires to take salmon with the fly? It amounts, in my opinion, to this, that his aim should be to prepare a lure to which life-like motion shall be given, whereby, not the hunger of the fish may be tempted, for of hunger the salmon is incapable in fresh water, but its attention arrested, its curiosity, pugnacity, love of destruction, aroused. Ages ago, when I was a boy, I had

a fuller share than was common in those days of the love and reverence for wild animals. Nowadays, one of the most satisfactory features of boylife is, that it is unusual to find a boy indifferent to sympathy with beast and bird. Plenty of boys collect butterflies, for instance; very few did so a generation ago; but it was the custom at the school where I was entered to form tomahawk parties, armed with wooden tomahawks, which sallied forth butterfly hunting. The boy who made the biggest bag won the honours of the day, but he made no use of the delicate victims; these were killed in sheer wantonness. Well, the same tyranny of strong over weak, of great over small, forms a trait in the character of every predatory animal, and I believe it to be precisely this trait that causes a salmon to crush a March brown or rise at a Jock Scott. Trout, of course, which may be regarded as non-migratory salmon, view a March brown in a far more serious light; trout rise to satisfy their appetite; salmon, to indulge their love of bullying. Consequently, the man who racks his ingenuity to devise a fly resembling, say, a shrimp, may catch many salmon with it, but not more than he who, like myself, is profoundly indifferent to the colour and composition of a fly, provided it is neither too large to cause suspicion or alarm, nor too small to escape observation, and provided it is exhibited in life-like motion.

The shrimp theory will die very hard; perhaps we are still a long way from giving it its death blow. But this much must be reckoned against it, that whereas shrimps and prawns frequent shallow waters, salmon, as has been shown above, have become incapable of taking food by the time they leave the deep water and enter the shallows. Very little has been added to our knowledge of the food of salmon, which is tantamount to confessing our almost complete ignorance of it; but there is evidence that they feed exclusively in deep water, not in estuaries, as has been hitherto supposed, and that the young of the herring, the haddock, and other such fish form a considerable, probably the chief part of their diet. How vain, then, yet how innocent, appears all the fuss we make about exact shade of silk and hackle! How groundless our belief in the superiority of special flies in different rivers!

The origin of this form of image worship is pretty obvious. It will be found that forty—fifty years ago, nearly all rivers boasted of a few local patterns which were held to be indispensable. These patterns in English and Scottish waters were invariably dull in tone and sober in hue. Why were these modest designs so much in vogue in those days, seeing that at the present time

the most brilliant combinations are recommended for the same rivers? Because the reputation of a fly has its source, not in the preference shown for it by the fish, but in the success of him who uses it. In days when salmon fishing was not so exclusive as it is now, nor so much sought after, nor so widely understood, there existed on every river local anglers of repute, generally in humble circumstances, who constructed their own flies. They had no command of costly and brilliant material—a few strands of crewel from an old carpet, a hackle from the rooster in the yard, or, as a dangerous luxury, a dyed one from the missus's Sunday bonnet, wings from the bubbly-jock's tail (generally the old-fashioned dun breed, and well-nigh extinct) or from the mallard's back—whatever material, in short, came easiest to hand. These humble lures caught most fish, because they were in the hands of the best fishermen; they became 'great medicine,' indispensable. As the taste for salmon fishing increased, and anglers began to go further afield for the sport, they took care to provide themselves with the flies reckoned most suitable for the Tweed, the Tay, the Spey, and so on; all the flies of that period displaying a general resemblance to each other in sobriety of tint.

A fishing log, carrying a consecutive record over a greater number of years than any other I have ever examined, is that begun about 1852 by the late Mr. Dunbar for the Thurso. From this it is manifest that the favourite colours in spring, forty years ago, were purple and green. The late Mr. Francis Francis, writing in the seventies, observed of the Thurso fish that 'they have undergone a complete change in their tastes since I was there; for when I was there they preferred a sober-coloured fly, but of late years they prefer more showy ones.' Can credulity be more naïve than this? or was Mr. Francis writing tongue in cheek? I cannot entertain the faintest shadow of doubt that, were sober-hued flies to be exhibited to the Thurso fish with the same regularity and perseverance that flaming confections of scarlet and yellow are now presented, the result would be precisely the same.

Gaudy flies gradually crept into Scotland and England from Ireland, where the quicker artistic instinct of the Celt guided him from the first to a preference for delicate harmonies and effective contrasts. But the idea of tickling the fancy of the salmon by tasteful compositions is of respectable antiquity even in this country. Quaint old Richard Franck, the Puritan dragoon and indefatigable detractor of Izaak Walton, writing in 1656, laid great stress on variety:

'Remember always to carry your dubbing bag with you; wherein there ought to be silk of all sorts, threads, thrums, moccado-ends, and cruels of all sizes and variety of colours; diversified and stained wool, with dog's and bear's hair; besides twisted fine threads of gold and silver; with feathers from the capon, partridg, peacock, pheasant, mallard, smith, teal, snite, parrot, heronshaw, paraketta, bittern, hobby, phlimingo, or Indian flush; but the mockaw, without exception, gives flames of life to the hackle. . . . For should any man, under the pretence of an artist, remain destitute of these prenoted qualifications, proclaim him a blockhead; let him angle for oisters.'

This is quite according to modern doctrine, though it might be considered hazardous to carry this wonderful paraphernalia to the riverside, as is recommended, so as to be able to construct on the spot the exact fly most suitable for the day:

'You must then clap down beneath some rock, or you may shelter yourself in the cavities of earth; so with curious inspection and diligent observation, the brightness or gloominess of the day considered, fashion your device according to your art.'

Well, well! we are an exceedingly well-informed generation; heaven and earth, the waters above the firmament and the waters below the firmament have yielded secret after secret to our pertinacious inquisitiveness. It is really refreshing to know that many generations shall pass away before the majority of salmon anglers shall have ceased to believe in the virtue of 'changing the fly.'

SWIMMING FOR LADIES

BY CONSTANCE EVERETT-GREEN

Of all pastimes suitable for the season of summer, swimming is in many ways the most attractive. In almost every other form of exercise we rapidly become hotter than we like, whereas in swimming we indulge in the luxury of cooling ourselves whilst we are enjoying to the full the pleasures of physical exertion. The cleansing and refreshing exhilaration of a good swim can hardly be realised by those who have not experienced it, and only a small measure of its joy is tasted by those who bathe, but cannot swim.

And yet how popular bathing is! Wherever in England there is a good stretch of flat sand—the abhorrence of the swimmer—a holiday resort springs up, esplanade and 'Marine Parade' rise from the shore, and the inevitable row of bathing machines plants itself upon the sand, whilst a long train of would-be bathers is to be seen daily waiting, patiently or impatiently, for a turn in that hot and hateful contrivance of modern civilisation, the bathing machine. If hundreds and thousands of ladies and children as well as men are willing and eager to submit to this discomfort daily, during the warm weather, it is obvious that the mere pleasure of going into the water for a few minutes must be very considerable. And yet but a small proportion of these bathers swim really well, especially on the ladies' side of the shore. It may reasonably be contended that good swimmers of both sexes avoid fashionable watering-places, and prefer to resort to a rocky coast where deep water is to be found, and where they can bathe *au naturel* from the shore or from boats. I hope this is partly the reason why so few

skilful swimmers are to be found amongst the ordinary run of lady machine bathers. Otherwise their paucity is both regrettable and hard to account for.

The difficulty of learning to swim no doubt explains a good deal, and then the apparent capriciousness of it, too, is rather trying. The beginner who has learnt the stroke is quite likely to strike out correctly and sink invariably, whilst the 'old hand' strolls and loiters about in any unbuoyant attitude, and keeps afloat with a twist here and half a kick there. Most annoying! and there seems no reason why the beginner should sink when he is doing it *right*, and every reason why the 'old hand' should sink when he is doing it *wrong*. As a matter of fact, the *balance* in swimming is very subtle, as also the management of the breath, and often a very slight clumsiness in either particular nullifies the action of the arms and legs. Everyone knows in learning to bicycle and to skate that balance is everything, but many people hardly realise its importance in swimming, and think that correct action is the only difficulty to be mastered. With some people this fortunately *is* the case; the balance comes naturally, the arm-stroke is easy, and the leg-stroke can be acquired with a little practice. These bathers learn to swim in perhaps half a dozen lessons; but they are rare. To some the sense of balance never comes, or only comes after months or years of trying; these are the discouraging pupils about whom we feel hopeless, and, of course, many people can never learn to swim, after diligent practice year by year. No failure seems to come up to the failure of the would-be swimmer. The would-be golfer and tennis-player, the crab-catching rower, the clumsy cyclist, the falling skater– one and all can do it just a little, sometimes—but the would-be swimmer, never.

Those who have not taught a friend probably do not realise how wonderfully little control an average girl has over her legs. Boys may perhaps be better, as they play various kicking games; but I have often been amused to hear a girl solemnly assure me she *was* striking out widely in the way I had directed, when, as a matter of fact, she was merely mildly wagging her knees up and down, and splashing her feet in and out of the water. This lack of control, or want of obedience in the lower limbs, adds greatly to the initial difficulty of the leg-stroke, which is not easy *per se*, since it is quite different from any exercise the legs can possibly practise when supporting the body on shore.

Having spoken of the difficulty of balance and leg-stroke, and the ease in acquiring the arm-stroke, I must pass on to another

subject of a subtler kind, which some people call courage or pluck, but which is better called confidence or nerve, and without which the other three essentials are useless. And it is necessary not only to have confidence, but to be able to rely upon its not deserting you. This quality of confidence comes into every sport practised, but in swimming to a greater extent than in any other, and it is as necessary to the beginner as it is to the expert. To the one its loss means sinking and swallowing water, and scrambling to your feet, to the other it may mean drowning. Unfortunately the condition of our nerves changes with the condition of our health, and even if we possess a temperament favourable to the retention of confidence, we may suddenly lose it and get into difficulties; and I think that many bathing accidents to swimmers may be due to such a sudden and unexpected loss of nerve, instead of to 'cramp,' the usual scapegoat. Not only is it impossible to become a good swimmer without confidence, but it is impossible to become a swimmer at all. When, as is usual with beginners, you are trying to swim in shallow water, it is not a serious matter to go under for a moment and emerge blinking and spluttering, or even to struggle for a few seconds before finding your feet; yet the dread of this so paralyses many that they really can hardly bring themselves to try to swim unless a friend is holding them up. I cannot too strongly condemn the jocular practice, in which many bathers indulge, of pushing under the head of the struggling swimmer, and worse still are the ministrations of the friend who supports you for a time, and then either abandons you, contrary to a given promise, or 'ducks' your head. This tends to destroy confidence; it may throw a learner back for weeks, and increase the natural and usual, but inexplicable and unreasonable, dread of water which most human beings experience directly they are brought into conflict with its power. Those who never enter the water may not understand my meaning, and impatient nurses and parents often experience the greatest annoyance over the 'cowardice' of their children when bathing. But this dread is an established fact with the majority of the human race, and ought not to be blamed like a bad quality or a show of obstinacy. Almost any candid swimmer will acknowledge that he still feels a trace of that same dread when about to enter the water for the first time in the season, and that, without any fear or reason for fear, there is a certain catch in the throat and quickened breath before the plunge is taken. Colloquially we call it 'feeling bathing-machiney,' and I think most readers who have never heard the expression will neverthe-

NON-SWIMMERS

less recognise the meaning, and remember well how it attacks them from the moment that the door is shut upon them, intensifies itself when the bare feet touch the clammy floor, and is only conquered after we are well in the water. Of course the feeling is partly physical—the apprehension of the shock to be received from the cold water. This apprehension, coupled with the 'unnaturalness' of the swimming attitude, is explicable, but the subtler side remains prominent and inexplicable, though none the less a fact.

Swimmers may be roughly divided into three classes—poor swimmers, fair swimmers, and good swimmers—but of course there is no hard-and-fast line which separates one class from the next.

If we allow the imagination to transport us to some English bathing resort on a warm morning in August, and to take us past the gay esplanade with its crowd of smartly dressed promenaders, and down upon the shore amongst the medley of boats and nigger minstrels, photographers, and cheap vendors, nursemaids and children, sand-castles, laughter and tears—we shall at length reach the margin of the sea, and in time be able to join the long line of bathers disporting themselves amongst the waves. The ladies who are in charge of children remain in shallow water as a matter of course, but they are the victims of circumstance. Further from shore, and up to the waist or shoulders, the majority of bathers are to be seen, capering up and down and splashing about in a manner which the 'poor swimmer' considers feeble and idiotic, because she has herself attained to something more fascinating. Here, too, she is to be found, and can readily be distinguished from the 'fair swimmer,' because her efforts are directed shoreward and never seaward, and only in her boldest moments does she even swim parallel with the coast. It is essential she shall remain in her depth, because she can only keep up for a few moments. Let us watch her, and see why she has to rest so soon. Well, in the first place she often draws a huge breath before starting, and makes no attempt to breathe again whilst swimming. Consequently she has to find her feet directly her lungs demand a fresh supply of air. Most foolish of her certainly, but this trick seems to be part and parcel of her intense determination to succeed. Determination is an excellent thing in its way, but it must be tempered with discretion and guided into suitable channels. The beginner generally holds her head too high also, and if she does not (as above) hold her breath all the time, breathes spasmodically and in great gasps, does not know

when or how to expel the air, and fears always she will swallow the next wave. This is all very natural, but it will come right in time quite easily with the access of a little more confidence.

But there is another conspicuous feature which distinguishes this and all beginners. She strikes much, *much* too fast. 'Oh, but I cannot keep up if I don't strike fast!' and off she goes, kick, kick, kick, almost as fast as you can count, and comes to her feet gasping and triumphant after traversing two yards in eight strokes. 'No, but I really sink *at once* if I strike slowly,' and she proceeds to do so, disappearing immediately at the second stroke. 'I told you so! Of course you good swimmers can strike as slow as you like, but we beginners *must* fight all we know, or we go down.' It is as difficult to argue about as the breathing. So easy to say 'breathe naturally and regularly: strike out quietly and evenly, and yet so hard to do.' In either case it is because you *think* the slow method will sink you that it does so. It is not your action which sinks you, but your mistrust of it, and if you can but take my word for this fact, you will improve directly. Do we not know well that if the tottering cyclist *thinks* she will upset when that clattering cart overtakes her—well, she *will*? But if her trusted instructor is by and shouts out, 'Stick to it, Miss! You're all right, you won't fall off!'—well, she doesn't.

Let that valuable quality, determination, which at present causes you to hold your breath and strike out with feverish haste, be directed into the channel of quiet rhythmical movement of chest and limbs, and you will rapidly leave the ranks of the beginners.

And now let us join the 'fair swimmers,' and see what they do and how they differ from the 'poor swimmers' or beginners. Of course they have more experience and more confidence, they strike more slowly and swim faster, and they love to go just out of their depth and back again. It is so exciting! Let us go twelve strokes out to sea and twelve strokes back again, and when we turn and find a nice little sheet of water separating us from the mob of bathers, how proud we feel! And even if we are a little bit chokey, and put down our feet once or twice searching vainly for the land, we are not greatly dismayed; we struggle on, and at length stamp about proudly and recover our strength for another turn. The 'fair swimmers' revel in the attendance of a boat stationed a few yards out to which they can swim, and where they can hang on and rest, or try a little diving for a change. If they should get into difficulties this convenient boat can rescue them; it therefore encourages them to test their

new-found powers further and further daily, and by this gradual encouragement may soon turn them from fair into really good swimmers. Indeed, it seems to me that with many fair swimmers it is the lack of opportunity alone which prevents their making any marked improvement, coupled perhaps with a sense of prudence and a realisation of the danger of being a long distance from shore.

It cannot be denied that every year good swimmers are drowned from unexplained causes whilst bathing, and those of us who remain on shore watching relatives and friends swimming in deep water cannot be accounted unreasonable if we feel a little nervous until we see them in their depth again.

In many English watering-places a boat is now stationed to prevent accident, and I believe this is usually done abroad. It ought always to be done; but who is to bear the expense? Abroad it is usual for family parties of both sexes to bathe together, and it is a most excellent plan for helping the ladies on with their swimming. Probably husband, father, brother, all are better swimmers than the ladies, and their escort and encouragement, their handiness for rescue, and the confidence inspired by the guidance of two stalwart males a few feet off on either side, encourage the beginner and enable her to make rapid progress directly the initial difficulties of the stroke are mastered. Conversely the lack of such help and encouragement may keep a lady a poor or fair swimmer all her life. It is to be hoped that England will go on imitating this foreign habit. We are used to lead in matters of sport, but surely in our seaside bathing arrangements we make as yet a very poor second to France.

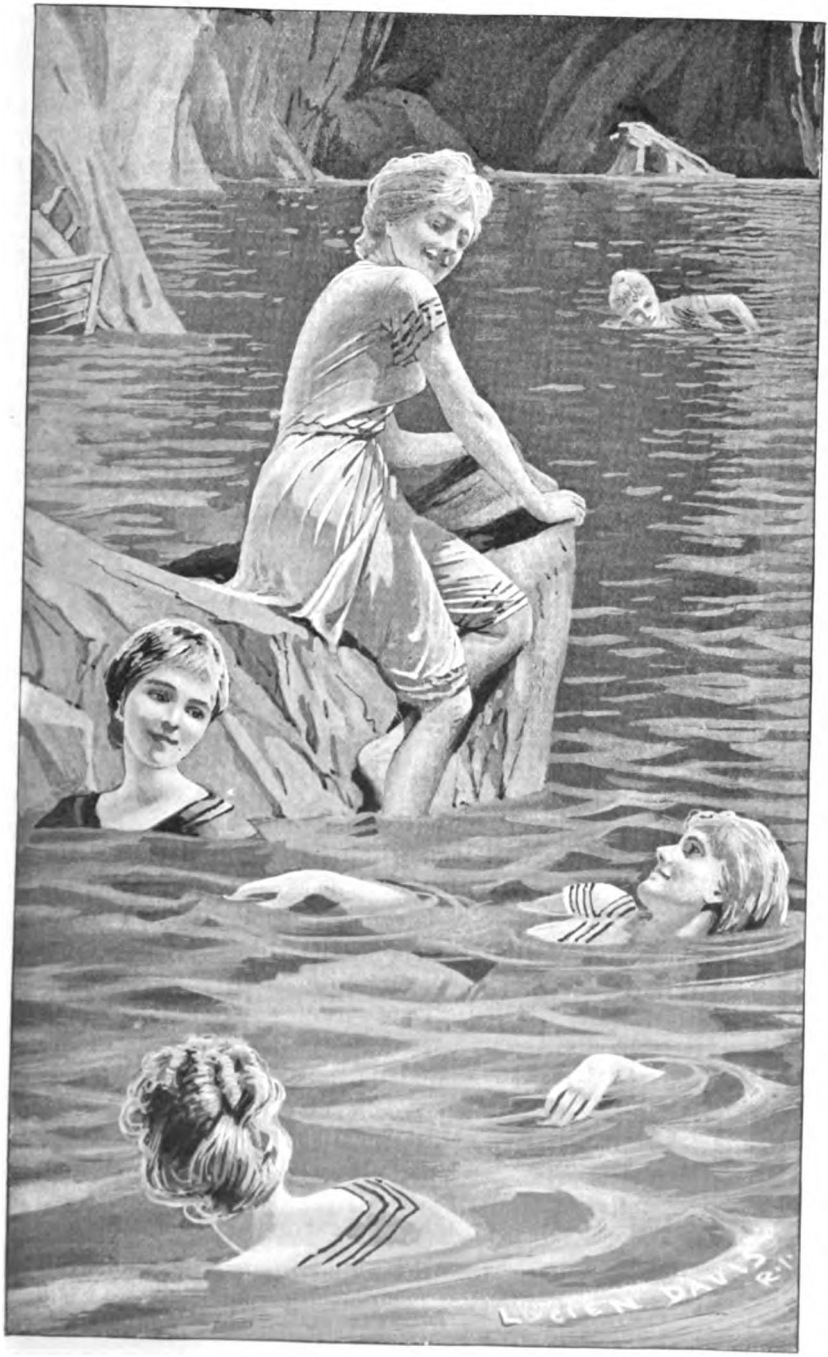
As the chief difference between the 'beginner' and the 'fair swimmer' is that the latter goes out of her depth occasionally and the former never, so the difference between the fair and good swimmer is that the former returns to her depth at once, whilst the latter goes out into deep water and stays there all the time. The 'good swimmer' rests in deep water, whilst the 'fair swimmer' rests with her feet on the ground, or perhaps it would be more correct to say that the 'good swimmer' does not want to rest at all. She swims, floats, treads water, and dawdles about without fatigue, only returning to the shallows when ready to leave the water. And, as I have said before, the difference between the two classes lies chiefly in two things—opportunity and confidence. I well remember the moment at which I myself made that step in advance, when a friend said to me with an impatience for which I have ever afterwards felt grateful, 'Why

do you hang on to the boat to rest? It's all fancy. You don't really *want* to. You can rest just as well without.' I was quite under the impression that after a long swim with a boat in deep water I was justly entitled to 'hang on,' but I then discovered that I could rest equally well on the water. Of course I do not for a moment mean to draw a hard-and-fast line about resting, for the most accomplished swimmers may often climb out on rocks, enter a boat, or go into shallow water for a time, but it is not a necessity to them.

Great as is the value in saving life (both your own and others') of the accomplishment of swimming, in case of upset or accident, it must be confessed that swimmers run a risk solely from the exercise of this talent which they would not run if they remained in their depth.

Take, for instance, the bold and plucky 'poor swimmer.' I know of one such who, on several occasions, nearly drowned her friends who had to rescue her. She *would* go out of her depth and sink, and they had to make a chain and haul her in. Had they not been tall and spirited, and able to swim a little, they could not have done it. And she only grumbled at them when they dragged her into her depth again! We may well pray to be delivered from such courageous persons; but fortunately they are rare.

The treachery or uncertainty—for I do not wish to be discourteous to our beloved sea—of waves and winds, of tides and currents, and the way in which our own strength and nerve varies from day to day, each and all form a definite source of danger. Sometimes the very confidence of a good swimmer leads her to neglect the precaution of ascertaining the drift of the sea before she enters it. Sometimes the incredulity of the bathing attendant as to the possibility of a lady's really being able to swim may lead to difficulties, and the most careful may find herself in an awkward situation. I remember once being told by the bathing man before entering the water that ''Taint no matter, you swims whichever way you likes,' and then proceeding to swim to the pier, which was a very modest distance away. I reached it easily, and found myself the observed of all observers. But, alas! when I started to return I found it impossible to progress, and was obliged ignominiously to sneak along underneath the pier, and out of sight, making a dash from pile to pile until I reached my depth, and walked back to my machine feeling very small indeed. 'Of course if I'd knowed as you meant swimming to the *pier*, I'd 'ave told you as you couldn't never git back agin.'



DEEP WATER

All very well, but too late, and I *had* asked if there was any drift or current in the sea which would affect swimmers.

'Fair swimmers' may occasionally be in a good deal of danger from being caught by slight currents and drifts, from miscalculating the strength of the tide or wind, and forgetting how rapidly the depth of water increases on a flat shore. These do not so much affect the 'good swimmer,' for if she does find her powers insufficient to bring her safely ashore, she does not lose heart, and can wait and signal for help, or dispassionately calculate her best plan of safety and carry it out calmly, whilst the 'fair swimmer' may lose heart and head, and begin to choke and flounder. When placed in such a difficulty as this, the swimmer must at once bring her *will* into play, and force herself to keep calm, realising that herein lies her chance of safety. Usually it only means a certain extra distance to swim when cold, tired and dispirited, but a good heart will carry us safely to shore if we will but persevere steadily a few minutes longer.

The joys of really deep-sea swimming are difficult to describe, and are hardly imagined, much less realised, even by the swimmers of smaller experience. Deep water can best be found on a rocky coast, and found close inshore, too, instead of half a mile out, as on a flat and sandy coast. Also the water is much clearer and cleaner—a matter of importance to us ladies, as otherwise our hair is sticky and full of sand after we have bathed. An open-air toilet on the rocks, a quick plunge from an overhanging shelf, and then to find yourself tossing in deep blue water fathoms and fathoms deep! That is the real way to enjoy yourself. The buoyancy of the deep water is in itself a wonderful exhilaration, and there is absolutely no effort required to keep afloat. And then the poetry of it! There is a strange sense of newness, of aloofness from earth as you lie heaving on this great world of water and gaze up at the frowning cliffs overhead. And I think the knowledge that man is not an amphibious animal, and that it is your will and skill which stand between you and death, give an added intensity to your enjoyment. Then after all the pleasure of rhythmic movement—of a good swim when the waves slip past so easily—there comes the return to shore, the, perhaps, exciting landing on the rocks, which is not always very easy, and then the leisurely toilet in the sun and solitude. How different from the heat and horror of the bathing machine and the turmoil of the beach! But alas! such places are not easy to find, and are especially inaccessible to ladies, as that better swimmer—'man'—generally appropriates them.

There is, however, always open to us the possibility of bathing from a boat in deep water. But here our toilet is more or less of a difficulty as compared with the simple methods of the man bather. Either we must undress on shore and be rowed out in our bathing costume, or we must put up a tent in the boat, as I have done times out of mind, and anchor in deep water. Comic difficulties may arise from this practice, and such have several times occurred to me. I well remember one gusty morning, after having, as we thought, anchored our tented boat safely in the lee of the cliffs surrounding our cove, how we suddenly discovered that she had broken loose and was in full sail for the opposite rocks —tent flapping, dog howling! Hot pursuit—all in vain, we literally were not in the race at all, and unfortunately we were at the moment rather cold and tired and just ready to get in and dress! So we swam back to our side of the cove, and climbed out on the rocks to dry in the sun, and signalled. But a man bather had already seen, and scrambling into his boat just as he was, was nobly pulling in pursuit of the runaway, and he in turn was met by a fully clothed boatman, who took our vessel from him and brought her back to us, my dog almost wagging himself overboard for joy at being rescued.

Both when bathing off rocks, and when anchored in deep water, the swimmer must always first ascertain if there are any currents or drifts of any kind which affect the surrounding water. These are always known to the fishermen, as also how they set at different states of the tide. The best swimmer can only accomplish a mile in about half an hour, so it is obvious how powerless we are to contend against any strong current.

As before mentioned, the foolhardy 'poor swimmer' is a very rare bird, but, unfortunately, the foolhardy 'good swimmer' is not; indeed, the confidence engendered by skill in swimming, good nerve, and a strong physique, often makes a swimmer think he can safely bathe anywhere and swim out any distance. Ladies are not often offenders by these imprudent practices, so the lady swimmer seldom meets with the accidents which all too often occur to men.

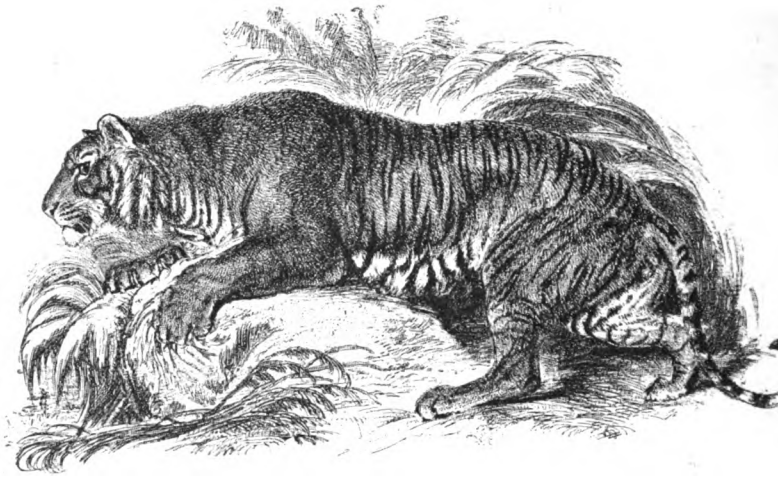
There is yet another style of bathing which is very pleasant—viz. when you can arise from bed and straightway put on your bathing dress and take your swim, returning to your room and your hot water and performing your toilet without extra trouble. This is very delectable, but the place has to be found!

One word in conclusion about dress. Certainly in swimming I am an advocate for 'rational' dress and no skirt, and I think

simple knickerbockers and a high body with short sleeves is a much more decent garment than the usual skirted costume with low neck and no sleeves. The lower limbs of the bather are only seen as she enters and quits the water, and the *dry* skirt alone conceals them, not the wet skirt, which, as she leaves the water, clings tightly round her. So as the skirt only fulfils its purpose when the bather walks or dives into the water, and it seriously impedes her swimming powers, I do not think it worth her while in a general way to wear one. If, however, social custom, the opinion or practice of companions in the water, or the fact of bathing with both sexes, renders it advisable to wear a skirt, the swimmer should have one which buttons down the front, like an ulster, and so arranged that it can unbutton and be fastened back to the waistband, and thus leave the legs quite free if the wearer wishes to take a long swim. Cotton twill is an excellent material for a bathing dress; it carries much less weight of water than serge, and also stands wringing out better, and dries immeasurably faster. But in dress ladies will always please themselves, and if shop costumes are any guide to the public taste, it would seem that most of us prefer to carry several pounds weight of woollen braid and limp frills and flounces, which, in reality, are very unsuitable for the lady who 'means business' in the water.

Have I said too much about the dangers of swimming? Well, they exist, but, except in very rare instances, they can be avoided by forethought and prudence, and, therefore, it is just as well to mention them, perhaps even to emphasise them.

It is, I think, impossible to exaggerate the pleasures of swimming. First comes the bather's enjoyment of merely being in the water, then the ardour of effort, the ups and downs of the learner, the joy of each step gained, and each difficulty left behind, then the wonder and pride of being out of your depth, and finally the serene joy of the accomplished swimmer who has made a real true friend of that great and wonderful thing—the sea.



NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

NOT a few readers will share my regret that hencefor Stockbridge is to be effaced from the Racing Calendar. T Bibury Club will reappear at Salisbury, but it cannot be qui the same, and we shall sorely miss the old familiar scen associated with so many well-known friendly faces. Wh Danebury was rebuilt, and Tom Cannon succeeded his father-in-la old John Day, it seemed as if Stockbridge was assuredly safe f generations to come; but unhappily there was truth in the ug rumour that the lease would not be renewed, and so the aspe of the Downs is to be altered, I suppose, by the destruction the old stand and the disappearance of the rails which have f so long marked off the racecourse. The place had already some extent changed. For several years we have missed t Duke of Beaufort—with a colt for the Troy Stakes, named af one of his places—for the Duke was a staunch supporter of Stoc bridge, and when the stand was redecorated, Tom Cannon h the woodwork at the top painted red, white and blue, in reprodu tion of the light-blue and white-hooped jacket and red ca Lord Suffolk, too, will always be associated with Stockbridge many minds, for he loved the Downs and delighted in the meetin 'Poor Dover!' was, I know, in the thoughts of his old friends t

other day—of Sir William Throckmorton and Sir Frederick Johnstone, I am sure. There is so much to be said of Stockbridge and Danebury that I hope to put together some 'Reminiscences' for the next number.

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Five-furlong races—of course for others than two-year-olds, for whom, early in the season particularly, that distance is quite far enough—ought they to be supported or abolished? Difference of opinion exists on the subject, but personally I think it would be wise if six furlongs were to be made a minimum. It is so small a matter: 240 yards—720 feet! The distance between five or six furlongs means merely something between thirty and forty strides. It seems wonderful that such a little way should make such a big difference, that an additional 8,640 *inches* should prove such a severe tax, for instance, to a great horse like Ugly. We all know that many horses fail when called upon to compass this trifling extension of a course; that animals well nigh invincible at five furlongs are easily beaten at six by horses that would have had no sort of chance with them at the shorter distance. One cannot, therefore, it is true, say that 'what is fair for one is fair for another,' but the question arises whether it is worth while encouraging horses that can get five furlongs and cannot get six? Owners possessed of the former class will reply with a vigorous affirmative, of course, and so will others who know how extremely probable it is that they will find in their stables horses that reach the end of their tether rather before than after five furlongs have been covered—and often an easy five furlongs at that. But those who look solely at the best interests of racing are likely to adopt different views.

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Are these five-furlong horses desirable animals to cultivate? Look through the list of sires and see what sort of creatures owe paternity to horses that could not get a mile. Juggler has a few winners, it is true; Dog Rose had four last year who won a single small race each. Deuce of Clubs' children won seven races worth in all 907*l.* last year. I think that about completes the list, and none of these winners looks like doing a very great deal in his turn towards improving the English thoroughbred. One mischief of five-furlong races is their uncertainty. To get off well is half the battle, and in order to do this every one who has seen a few starts knows how horses are pulled about and worried,

dashed off at speed, hauled and sawed back again, turned and twisted, to the serious injury of their tempers and their joints. The starting machine? My opinion is emphatically in the negative. At Gatwick the other day half of the webbing went up, the other half did not, so that a few of the field got away, and the rest were so blocked that a serious accident was narrowly escaped; and at Hurst Park afterwards, though the affair seemed to work well enough, four animals started in a procession—why I do not know, but so it was. For the rest, some horses 'get clever' at it and some never take to it kindly, even when they have been schooled to it; and I object to this schooling, because a horse has quite enough to do in the course of his ordinary training without being taught new tricks of doubtful value when learned, and there is always a serious risk of accident when excitable animals are wedged together in a line within easy kicking distance. It is easy to understand why the jockeys so strenuously oppose the machine. They have only two legs each, and do not want to have one of those broken. If it is asked why accidents do not happen in the Colonies and elsewhere where the machine is used, the answer is that they do.

Soon after writing the above remarks on short-distance races I took up an old volume of the *Sporting Magazine*—my constant literary sustenance when at Newmarket—and there read some severe comments on long-distance races, as those contests struck the critic of sport at the beginning of the century. There was a race for the Jockey Club Plate, a now extinct event, over the Beacon course, and the writer—the italics are his—says of the result: 'Vitellina *crept* in first, Silvertail *crawled* in second, and Furbisher *rolled* in third, an exhibition enough to put a stop to long races.' Both extremes, it appears, are equally open to condemnation, and this is really reasonable enough. Horses, so far as can be ascertained, seldom *raced* over the Beacon course. Now and then, no doubt, it was the game of some competitor to jump off, cut down the field, run them out of it, and then he came home more or less at his leisure. Frequently, on the other hand, the horses cantered for over three-quarters of the way, and only then put on the pace. The ideal course seems to be from a mile and a half to two miles. The horse with only a flash of speed to recommend him is run out of it, and the creature that plods on at a certain pace has not the requisite speed to finish with; and a racehorse without speed is a sorry sort of beast. In a good field of horses

that have to cover something like a couple of miles, speed and stamina are both tested, and this is how it should be. Some sound judges would not demand quite so much, and would say that if a horse wins, of course in decent company, Across the Flat, a mile and a quarter, no better proof of his all-round excellence is needed; and that is an opinion I should not be very ready to contradict. A. F. wants a lot of staying.

It is rather hastily assumed that Jeddah is a good horse, and the sudden admiration for him that has lately arisen is not a little quaint. He was described a few days before the time of writing this as a 'giant,' the epithet applying not to his size but to his capacity, and his admirers evidently regarded it as certain that he would win the St. Leger. He may do so. The friends of Cap Martin rather hope their colt will stay than venture to express a belief that he does so, and it is not easy to see from where danger to Jeddah is to come. That I admit without the least suggestion that Jeddah is an approach to a good horse; for his reputation merely rests on the fact that he has twice beaten Batt, and this hardly amounts to a certificate of merit, even after Batt's second (a very poor one) to Velasquez in the Eclipse. Nun Nicer is not entered in the Leger, and my impression is that the result of the race would not be affected if she were, as a mile, I suspect, is as far as she can gallop at top speed. Disraeli is now a model of placidity at home; no horse could do his work more quietly, and in his stable he was always most docile; but, ardent admirer of the breed as his trainer is, and keenly as he desires the colt's success at Doncaster, where he will make his next appearance, John Dawson reluctantly expresses doubts as to whether the son of Galopin and Lady Yardley will ever put his heart into a race again. It is melancholy to find a sound, speedy, staying colt that can but won't.

Few trainers have ever had before them a tougher task than that which confronts John Porter of Kingsclere. When the Duke of Westminster, Lord Alington and Sir Frederick Johnstone owned most of the horses, it must have been difficult to place Kingsclere trained animals, and to decide which should have the benefit of Mornington Cannon's skill in the saddle; though I believe 'the simple arbitrament of the coin'—the test of heads or tails—was the method adopted. There was always the chance, too,

of Mr. William Low or Mr. Frank Alexander having a Derby horse; and now the Duke of Portland's big string has gone to Kingsclere and Lord Crewe, I believe, is anxious to follow, only there is not room for his horses. Here, then, are half a dozen owners all anxious to win the same class of race, the 'classical' and chief events, and one jockey attached to the stable whose assistance is an immense advantage. Of course there are other jockeys to be got—when you can get them. John Porter is the soul of honesty and impartiality, and may be implicitly depended upon to do his best for all his employers; but their interests will necessarily always be clashing, and how he is to advise them all for the best passes comprehension! The Kingsclere trainer will be a fortunate man if he has not many anxious days and wakeful nights in the course of the next year or two.

For once the Eton and Harrow match was finished, though at one time in the afternoon of the 9th of last month it looked as if there were going to be a fifth consecutive draw. The decision to play on till half-past seven, however, led to a definite result, and now, out of the last forty-one matches, twenty-six have ended in a win. On the whole Mr. R. D. Walker's contention that 'the chances are rather in favour of a draw every year under the present conditions' is not exactly contradicted; but the annual discussion as to whether any reform might judiciously be introduced in regard to the match—extension of time, alteration of date, or change of venue—will be postponed till next year, if the match then ends in another draw. Dowson, the Harrow captain, has left his mark effectively in the history of the match. His 47 was a useful contribution; but he did even better with the ball—86 overs, 48 maidens, 127 runs, 9 wickets, being his record. In the first innings 6 wickets for 54 were his figures. Thrice he got a decision for l.b.w., the three who were thus out having made just 7 between them. Pilkington, too, has added largely to his reputation by excellent play. But for the extension of the time to 7.30 there would, in all probability, have been a fifth consecutive draw.

I have heard poor accounts of partridge prospects from several quarters. Apparently a considerable number of young birds were drowned in the rainy weather which came so persistently at an

inconvenient time; and in riding about near Newmarket, in districts where as a rule partridges swarm, I have found the outlook not at all propitious. In certain localities the pheasants are also doing badly, it appears. Two friends who live in different counties far away from each other both tell me gloomy stories of dead birds picked up, the nature of whose ailment they cannot ascertain. Such mournful recitals are, however, of yearly occurrence, and it generally appears that the creatures are afflicted by local conditions. There are usually enough pheasants, somehow or other, though the partridge crop varies considerably, and one always hears with special regret of any failure in the supply of these peculiarly sporting little birds.

A correspondent writes on the subject of shooting, 'You had a discussion in the Magazine some time since as to what proportion of "kills to cartridges" were to be expected from a *good* shot; what I want to know is something of the *average* shot? I am exceedingly fond of sport and shoot a good deal, but cannot disguise from myself the fact that I am a moderate performer, and, by the way, I wonder if a few visits to one of the shooting schools that I have read about would do me any good? Last year I regretfully refused an invitation to a shoot to which I should dearly like to have gone because I knew some men with reputations as "cracks" would be there, and I feared my want of skill would render me unpleasantly conspicuous. It is so depressing after a drive to hear the man one side of you say, "I've got nine down," to hear the man on the other side say, as his loader brings up a bird, "That's ten; there's another back in the turnips; one fell in the hedge, and you might tell one of the keepers to look for that bird that towered over there in the next field." You meantime—I don't mean *you*, but *I—know* I have one down; *think* I got a brace from coveys at which, however, my neighbour also fired, and he seems to have no doubt they are his; *hope* I hit one that may have dropped in the distance, and *am sure* I peppered another which went away, I was sorry to see, with a leg down. And there are seventeen empty cases on the ground!'

'Well, I met one of these "cracks" afterwards at another place. I got four driven birds and a hare in twenty-three shots, my accomplished neighbour only gathered six, and I am sure he

had, if anything, at this stand, more shooting than I. We were further separated afterwards, and I fancy he did better, so far as I could make out; but that is what happened when we were next each other. Now how many birds out of a dozen may I be permitted to miss without raising the contempt of observers, feeling a disposition to explain my failures apologetically to my loader, and to impress the fact upon the headkeeper, my host, and my companions when I *do* by chance have the luck to get two or three down?'

This is a difficult question to answer, for the reason, amongst others, that the 'average shot' is a very vague term, and may be taken as including many men of considerably varying capacity. As for the 'crack' neighbour, apparently he was 'off' on that particular occasion, as men sometimes are from various causes; though it may be incidentally remarked that when a man says 'I can't shoot a bit to-day!' it will *generally* be found that on other days his shooting is very much about the same. I met a cheery sportsman a couple of years ago, and at a very famous shoot moreover. After the first drive of the day he was asked what he had down, and casually replied that he 'thought there were three.' At the end of the next drive the same question was put to him, and he 'fancied there were five.' 'My dear old boy, I don't believe you've touched a feather up to now!' an intimate friend, who overheard, said to him, and he smilingly replied, 'I don't much think I have. But I didn't like to say so, and such a lot of birds *were* down that I thought I might as well claim a few of them!' and he kicked into quite a heap of empty cases which marked the spot where he had been standing. He was a man, nevertheless, who had shot frequently and in various parts of the world. As for the number that my correspondent may be allowed to miss out of a dozen, I can only say, as few as possible. It may be that the good old piece of advice to aim at the place where the bird will be when the shot gets there, and not at the bird itself, may be useful to him? I have never been to one of the schools of which he speaks, but I have heard more than one man speak highly of the improvement that practice in them has made in their shooting.

THE
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A CHAT ABOUT HERONS[1]

BY THE DUKE OF ARGYLL, K.G., K.T., &c.

IT is curious to note the very different ways in which different birds capture the same kind of prey. Each species has its own implements, and its own corresponding instincts in the skilful use of them. This is especially remarkable in the birds which live mainly or exclusively on fish. Their modes of capture are immensely different, and one of the most interesting of these modes is the fishing machinery and corresponding habits of the Herons.

Herons can't swim. They can't dive. They can't even plunge from the air into the water. For the most part they can do nothing but watch and wait at some standing place which they may select as a spot to which fish are likely to resort, or which they may have to pass on their way elsewhere. For this watching they seem to have been provided with even more than the patience of Job.

Their apparatus is nothing but very long legs, enabling them to wade into a moderate depth of water, eyes of great quickness and penetration, a long extensile neck, and the power of delivering with accurate aim an almost instantaneous darting stroke with a long, strong, and very sharply pointed bill.

It follows from this method of fishing that the Heron must always fish alone. It is essentially a solitary bird when feeding, watching by itself for solitary fish, and precluded from those

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habits of companionship which are common among birds that follow shoals and can never be afraid of each other's competition. A Heron must be, at least, as selfish as an angler who can't bear any water that has been already tried. Owing to these peculiarities Herons are nowhere numerous, although in very moderate numbers they are widely distributed, especially on the West coast of Scotland.

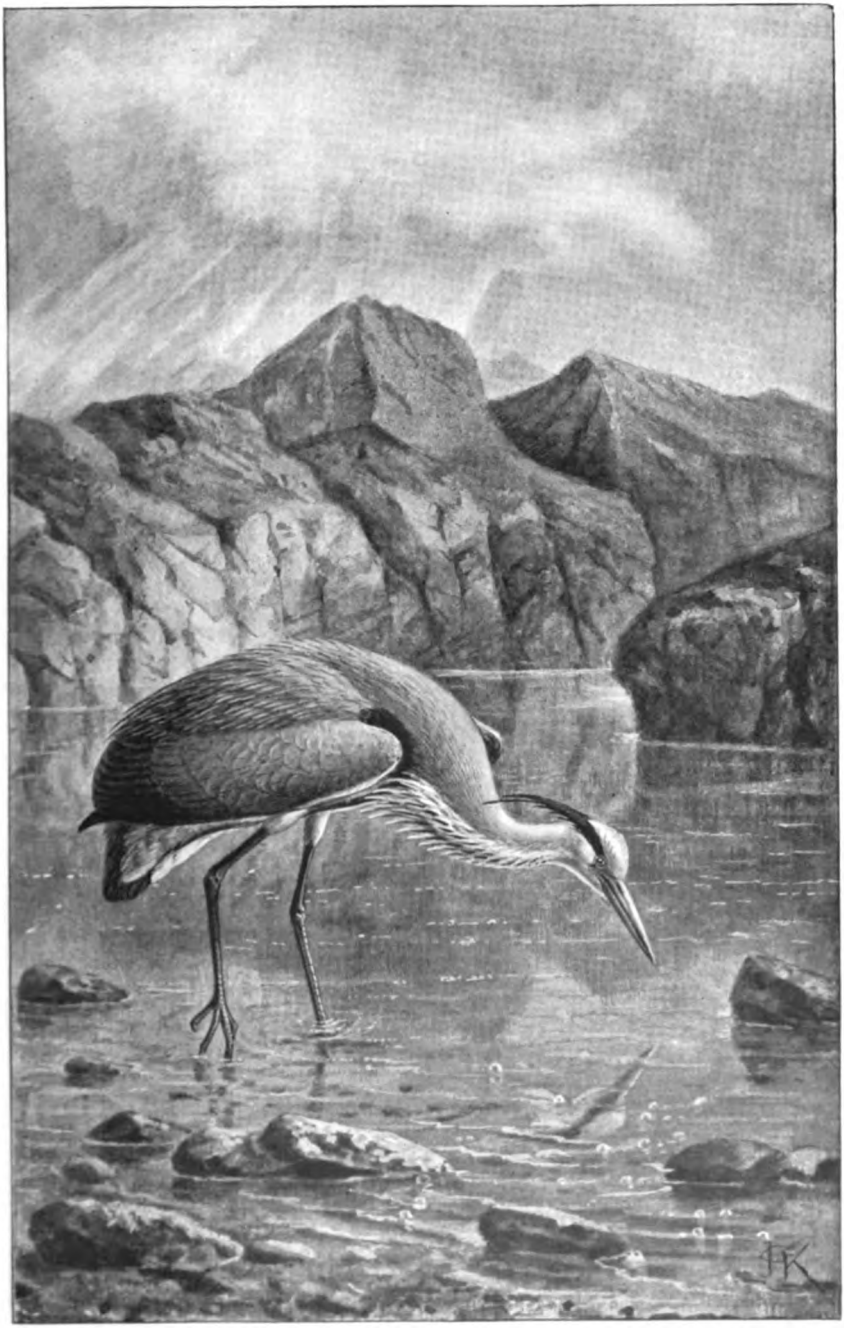
It is not every kind of water that a Heron can fish. Lakes and sea lochs which have deep water up to the rocky shore, and where even the fall of the tide leaves little or no level margin, supply no living to the heron. Neither do steep-sided brooks and rivers with deep water.

But, on the other hand, all sea lochs which have even a narrow shore at low water—still more those which, here and there, have wider margins of ebb on sand or mud—are favourite fishing grounds of the Heron; and all round the deeply-indented shores of the West of Scotland there are frequent small colonies of the bird, which send forth solitary fishers along the shores at all suitable times of tide.

The rivers which pour their waters into those lochs are also duly watched. Wherever there is a rapid bend on the stream with a deep on one side and a shallow on the other, a patient Heron will often be seen wading gently and standing where trout are likely to be not too deeply covered to be struck successfully. Often, too, in shallow runs between the deeper pools, where all fish on their passage up stream must pass certain spots that are little more than covered by water, the Heron takes post with an air of calm and contemplative innocence as if only admiring the beauty of the current over the polished stones.

Then, in the autumn of the year, when all the *Salmonidæ* are impelled by natural instinct to ascend to smaller tributary burns to reach suitable beds of spawning gravel, the Heron keeps steady watch over bits of the stream where the struggling mother fish must be very visible and easily struck.

Very often the sportsman who pursues grouse shooting late in the season will come suddenly and most unexpectedly on our long-legged and feathered friend when he has to cross a little burn upon the moors. On such occasions there is always a dreadful scene. The Heron flaps up with outstretched neck, hanging legs, and laborious wing-strokes—as if she were, indeed, 'a guilty thing surprised'—and betakes herself to some more open course of water where she can renew her vigils with less risk of such sudden and dangerous interruption.



WATCHING BY ITSELF FOR SOLITARY FISH

On the margins of the sea lochs the habits of the bird when fishing can be more easily studied. As there are heronries on both the estates where I have most resided in the country– one at Roseneath in Dumbartonshire and the other at Inveraray in Argyllshire—I have lived among Herons the greater part of my life, and have often watched them through telescopes as well as with the naked eye, yet I have never except once actually seen any important capture of a fish.

I have often seen them in the intent attitude ready to strike, which seemed to indicate that they saw an approaching fish, and I have often seen a stroke delivered. But the object caught, if any, must have been a very small one—a shrimp or other small crustacean—for nothing was visible in the bill, and there was no appearance of swallowing anything which required an effort.

Yet it is certain that fishes of very considerable size are captured by Herons. On one occasion I ordered a specimen to be shot in order to secure its wings for a lecture on flight. On opening its stomach I found the remains of a fish with a big, strong, spinous back fin. The rest of the fish was too far digested to be recognisable as to species.

But there are only a very few fishes in our seas with a back fin of that description. This one was probably, if not certainly, the Bass or sea-perch—*Labrax lupus*—and it is interesting to note that the spinous and apparently formidable defence seems to have been wholly useless to protect its owner from being swallowed by a bird with a soft and easily injured throat.

Of course, if the fish is swallowed head foremost, the projecting spines of the back fin would tend to be laid down or smoothed back in the direction in which their projection would be destroyed. And this is the way, I believe, in which all fish are swallowed by piscivorous birds. Certain it is that in this case the spines had been bolted and had reached the stomach without any injury to the upper passages.

What would have happened to the lower passages must remain a matter of curious speculation, which, it is to be hoped, was never present to the heron's mind. Probably the spines would have been softened, if not wholly dissolved, by the bird's strong digestive apparatus.

I have said that on one occasion only have I actually seen the capture of a good fish by a Heron. This was a case of much interest, because it showed in the fullest perfection of their action all the parts of the apparatus with which the Herons are supplied in the exercise of their peculiar functions.

It was a regular case, not of patient watching, but of active and skilful stalking; I will, therefore, describe it fully.

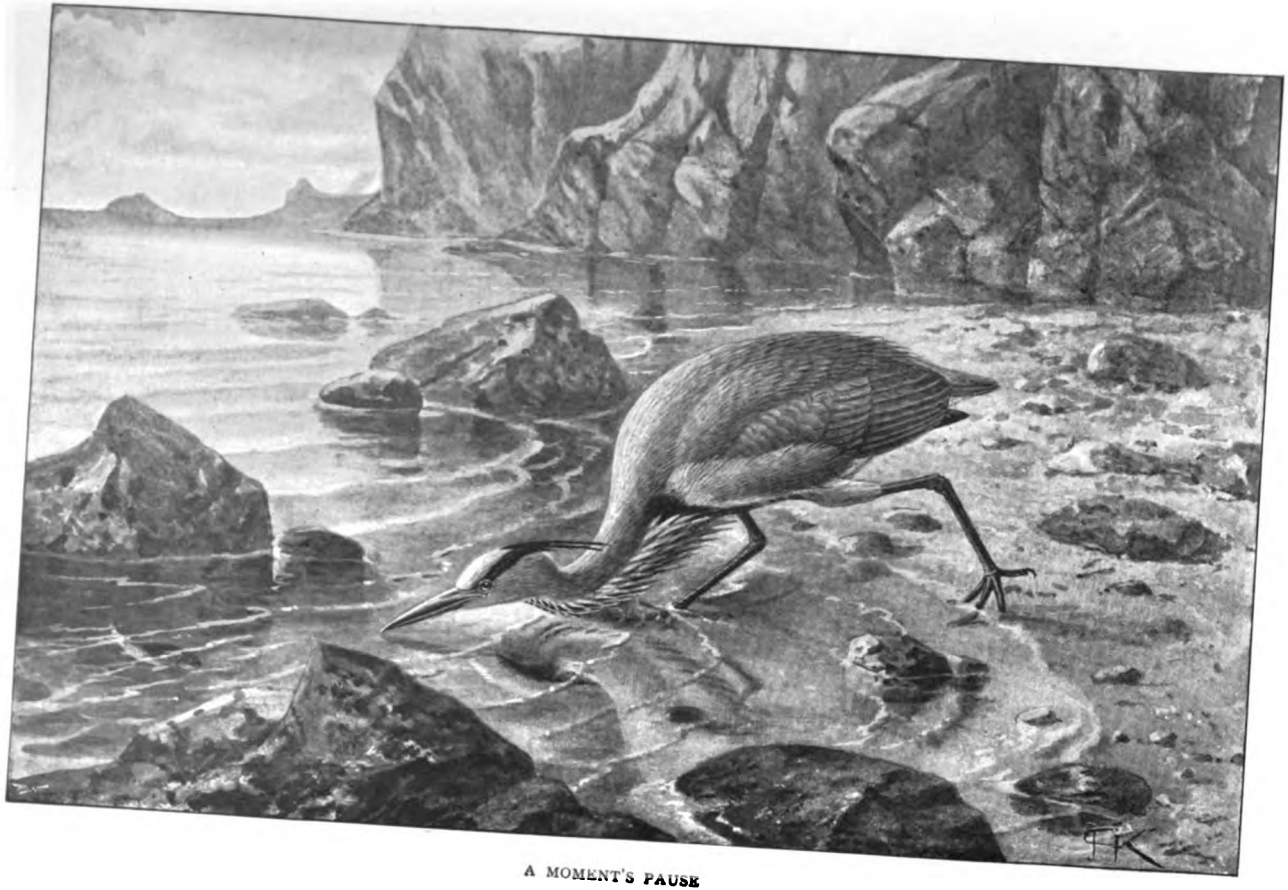
The river Aray, which falls into Loch Fyne under my house at Inveraray, has, like all Highland rivers at their mouths, what is called a sea pool—that is to say, a pool so nearly on a level with the sea that at full tides it is invaded by the salt water, and sometimes by the waves of the loch. But when the tide is out, the river passes into this pool in a broad, rapid, but very shallow run over stones and gravel.

All fish ascending the river from the sea pool must pass over the broad and shallow run. It is, therefore, rather a favourite watching place for a Heron. I frequently see one standing quietly in the middle of it; and very often Herons choose as a resting place the nearer or western bank, where the channel is often nearly dry.

On the occasion I refer to I saw a Heron coming from the other side of the river, and flying slowly over it to alight at the usual place. But instead of alighting and resting for a while as she generally did, the moment her feet were planted among the stones, she turned round facing the stream and threw herself into all the attitudes of a stalker. Her head and neck were lowered so as to be as inconspicuous as possible. The whole body became as nearly as possible horizontal, with the narrow and sharp front directed to the stream, and crouched as low as possible.

Then began the characteristic action of the long legs. They commenced to take very long, very slow, and the most stealthy steps. There was special gentleness in the lifting of each foot out of the thin water, and in the dipping of it into the water again. I saw in a moment what had happened. In flying over the stream very slowly, as a Heron flies on approaching a perch or station, she had evidently caught sight of some good trout on its way up the shallow run, and probably resting for a little behind some sheltering stone.

No time was to be lost. But the Heron could not do what an Osprey would have done under similar conditions. She could not arrest her own flight by hovering, and then dash down upon the fish without a moment's delay. Her wings were too big and clumsy for hovering. Her feet were without talons for seizing a fish. Her bill could not be aimed with any accuracy except as wielded by a stroke of the neck when well and comfortably balanced, and so her only course was to complete her crossing of the river and then turn round and begin a regular, stealthy stalk with her long legs advancing cautiously across the ripples of the shallow.



A MOMENT'S PAUSE

I watched her progress with intense interest. No trained deerstalker on the hills above us, creeping up to a stag discovered lying behind some rock or bush, could have shown more skilled or careful work. Sometimes there was a short pause, as if to be sure that no alarm had been given. Then the creeping footsteps were resumed, stride after stride taken with the most perfect steadiness, until she had evidently got very nearly within the striking distance of her long recurved neck and of her yellow dagger bill.

Then there was again a moment's pause, as if to steady the aim and to make sure against any error from the invariable refraction of water, after which, in a moment, there was a darting stroke, quicker almost than the eye could follow, and the unlucky trout was seen tossed up by the golden spear, caught again, and instantaneously swallowed head foremost. Then the stately bird shook her head, turned round, and began walking slowly back to the nearer shore.

On one occasion I have seen a Heron seem to lose her head under strong temptation and attempt a mode of fishing which is to her unnatural. The first pool above the sea pool in the Aray is a considerable stretch of water in which the current runs deep under an artificially defended bank on the eastern side. The top of the bank is occupied by strong sedgy grasses. The brink of this grassy bank is a favourite position for Herons to stand quietly during their resting hours.

The water below them is too deep for them to wade in or to fish. But the largest trout lie there, and the Herons seem to have some pleasure in quietly watching them in attitudes of meditative contemplation. I have often seen them there resting for hours on a sunny morning with the neck folded back and the beak resting on the fold.

On one of these mornings I saw a Heron get suddenly excited. She stretched her neck, looking intently into the pool below; some fish had evidently risen to near the surface. But as that surface lay some four feet below the top of the bank, it was far out of the reach of a stroke of her bill, and the position of her legs gave her no purchase for the delivery of a blow.

Still Heron nature could stand it no longer. So she threw herself headlong and passionately from the bank with a vicious thrust—of course in vain—and so, with outstretched wings and drenched plumage, she had to flap laboriously out of the pool again—a lesson to all sportsmen against unorthodox and poaching tricks.

But there is another mode of, and opportunity for, fishing for which the apparatus of the Heron is specially adapted, and which calls forth an excellent display of all its powers and instincts. It is when rivers are in flood, or, as it is called in Scotland, 'in spate.' At such times, wherever there is a curve or bend in the course of the stream, the whole volume of the swollen current rushes against the convex side of the bank, leaving comparatively still water or more gentle currents on the side which is concave.

All fish which are not strong enough to withstand the force of the rushing water, or which cannot find shelter under the lee of some rock or large stone, are swept off into such eddies and back-waters, or retarded streams, as may be formed by the configuration of the bed's banks. There they are often rather tired and stupefied; and if the water is at all turbid, as it generally is in floods, they cannot see the approach of danger as quickly as they usually do.

Such an opportunity is never missed if there be a colony of Herons within fishing distance. Some member of the gang is sure to be watching. The same pool in which, on its steeper side, I saw the effects of strong temptation upon one ill-disciplined mind, has upon its nearer side a long shallow shore of gravel. The current is very violent in floods upon the steeper side, but is comparatively weak upon the shallow side. Here, accordingly, in every heavy flood some Heron comes to fish.

She wades up to the full depth permitted by the length of her legs, watches the water intently with outstretched neck and threatening beak, and, no doubt, often secures some unusually large trout as the reward of her enterprise and skill. I am bound to confess, however, that as my patience in watching the Heron has never equalled the patience of the Heron in watching the fish, I have hardly ever seen a capture on such occasions, although one of my friends did from the window see one in the same pool above described.

The Heron on that occasion lifted out of the eddying stream a fish which was too large to be swallowed on the spot. It was, therefore, marched off to the bank and there despatched at leisure. But never, even at such places and times, when it might be supposed that a number of fish would be accessible to capture, have I seen more than one Heron fishing the same pool, however large or long.

From what I have stated it appears that the Heron earns a somewhat scanty and precarious living by dint, chiefly, of indomitable patience and great skill in the management of her weapons.

She is credited in most ornithological books with devouring frogs, and even mice, when occasion may offer. But neither of these articles of food can enter much into the diet of Herons in the Highlands of Scotland. In this country frogs are by no means abundant, and as to mice, the occasions must be rare indeed when a Heron gets a chance of swallowing a mouse. The bird is, undoubtedly, here almost entirely dependent on fish, and on the capture of fish one by one as they approach within reach at selected spots.

But as the adjustments of Nature are infinite, and subtle beyond the track of ordinary observation, the question naturally arises whether the Heron has been provided with any—as it were artificial—advantage or facility to compensate for the many obvious disabilities under which it lies, as compared with other fish-eating birds. It cannot pursue; it cannot swim or dive like the Merganser, or the Cormorants, or the Penguins; it cannot fly or plunge like the Gannets, or like the Osprey. It is bound to remain stationary like a stone or a stick, trusting that fish will come to it of their own accord. Has it been given any attractive power to help it in this game? I think it has—in its peculiar colouring.

Much has been written of late years about protective colouring—colouring in animals of all classes which serves to hide them from their enemies. The Heron has certainly no colouring of this kind, and does not need it, for it has few enemies, and is certainly a very conspicuous bird. It is very tall—very gaunt—with nothing whatever about it to diminish its rather ostentatious visibility. The phenomenon of attractive colouring has been less noticed, and is, indeed, probably very rare.

A very curious case of it has been found in an African spider which, in colour and in form, exactly resembles the droppings of bird's dung, by which flies are attracted within the fatal grasp of the spider's legs and fangs. I do not know of any recognised case of this device among the higher animals of prey. But I strongly suspect the existence and operation of it in the Heron.

The general hue of the whole upper plumage is simply a fine bluish-grey, or dove colour, which harmonises well with many kinds of rock and stones common in the bed of rivers and streams. But this is not the colour of the under parts of the Heron, which, from its habitual upright position, are the most conspicuous.

The whole front of its long neck is of a pure and very shining white, ornamented, indeed, by lines of black spots and streaks, but still more remarkably ornamented by pendant plumes of pure

white. When seen against any background which is dark, like the seaweeds of the shore, or even in shadow, as in the beds of streams, this colouring makes the Heron very visible even at great distances.

What can be the reason, the fittingness, of such a flaring colour in a bird which depends almost entirely for its living on the voluntary approach of other creatures which are very wary and easily alarmed?

Everyone who has fished the clear trout streams of England knows how sharp and wakeful are the eyes of those fish, and how the most careful stalking is needed to approach them without giving an alarm which is fatal to sport. The same observation applies to all the clear streams of Scotland, except those in which the ripples of a strong rapid current conceal from each other the fisherman and the fish. In rocky pools, too, left by the sea, it is remarkable how the enclosed fish rush for shelter into the crevices of the rocks or under the bits of seaweed when any wanderer on the shore comes within sight.

Although the eyes of fish are, of course, mainly adapted to vision underneath the surface of the water, they are nevertheless quite fitted to give notice of dangers coming from outside—a notice of which instant advantage is always taken in the most rushing movements of escape. It does, therefore, at first sight, seem a puzzle why Herons should be clothed in the most conspicuous of all colours when they absolutely depend at least on the absence of alarm in their prey.

But, as often happens in Nature, the very greatness of the puzzle may be the best suggestion of an explanation. In Nature there is nothing without a reason. Her whole system is essentially a reasonable system, a system in which means are invariably adapted to the securing of results. And that there is some reason concerned in this case may well be suggested to us by the fact that conspicuous whiteness is not confined to our common European Heron, but prevails more or less markedly in the whole tribe, in all parts of the world where they exist at all.

Some species of Heron, the lovely Egrets, are altogether of a pure white, the whole bird shining like a spot of snow. I believe the explanation to be very simple, though not obvious at first sight. It is this: that anything which throws a bright gleam into the water is in itself an attraction to fish.

Fish all prey more or less upon each other, and the under-surfaces of all fish are of a very silvery and gleaming whiteness. This is the principle of a mode of fishing which is common in

the Mediterranean, and, I believe, on some parts of the Atlantic shores—namely, the exhibition at the stern of boats of a blazing torch, which attracts various species of fish to the surface so as to come within the reach of spears. It is curious that this device is never practised in Scottish waters. But the attraction of gleaming substances to fish is, in other forms, very well known indeed, as witness the common use of white flies, or spoon-baits made of shining metal.

When, therefore, a Heron stands on the seashore as the tide is slowly rising, the gleam of its pure white neck is reflected in the water. Fish in search of prey prowl along the edges of the advancing line of shore; they are attracted by the sheen, and they approach, perhaps warily, in order to see exactly what it is.

Curiosity or inquisitiveness is strongly marked among some of the lower animals. Cows will crowd round any unusual object placed upon the surface of their pasture, and birds will often exhibit the same attention whenever they are roused by strange appearances. It is, therefore, quite according to the analogies of Nature that fish should be attracted to approach the shore to reconnoitre such a shining object as the tall neck of a Heron throwing its gleam upon the water.

And this would account for the behaviour of Herons when they are fishing in this way. What is most remarkable about their attitude is its absolute stillness. They are conscious that any movement might put an end to curiosity and substitute alarm. Absolute immobility is, therefore, an essential condition of success, and how wonderfully it is maintained can only be understood by those who have watched, as I have done, the Herons standing in this way on the shores, with their necks at 'full cock,' as it were, for a strike.

The whole expression is one of intense observation and expectancy, as if the prey were advancing very slowly and very warily to see what it was that shone so brilliantly, and as if the slightest movement might spoil the game. The reason for the colouring is thus fully explained—that is to say, it is explained when it is regarded as combined with corresponding instincts which enable the bird to put it to its proper use.

Again, all these great peculiarities in the mode of fishing are a full explanation of the solitary character of the fishing habits of the Heron. As no deerstalker would have any chance in company with others, so neither would a Heron have a chance unless absolutely alone.

It is not that there is anything unsocial in the character of

the Heron; on the contrary, there is, in this respect, an absolute contrast between the habits of the Heron when fishing and when either resting or nesting. Away from the pool or the shore the Heron is one of the most sociable of birds. They often perch in companies upon trees, and remain there for hours till the state of the tide is again suitable for fishing. They stand also in companies very often on meadows and marshes in the neighbourhood of the fishing ground.

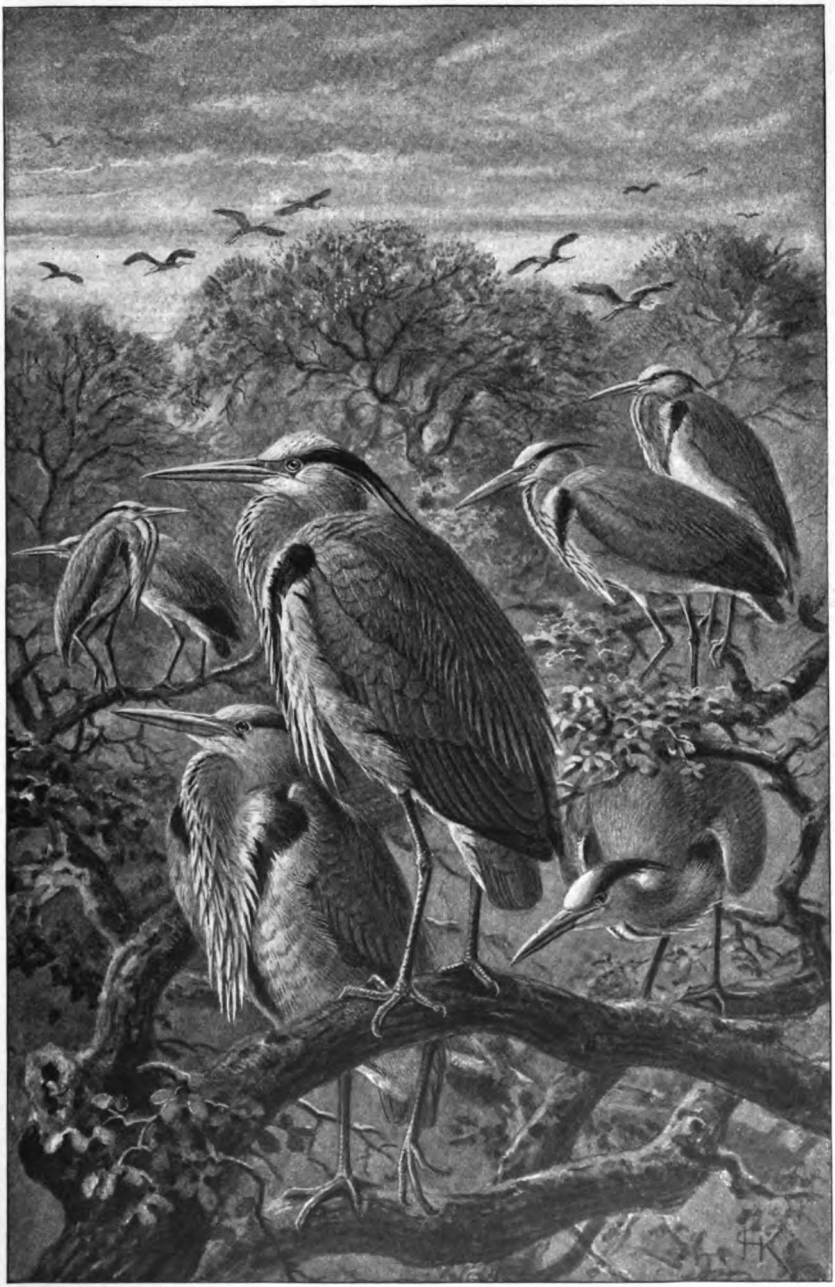
Above all they are eminently social in the nesting season. I have never seen a Heron's nest in a solitary position, or at any distance from others. We, therefore, speak of heronries as we do of rookeries. They may be very large or comparatively small; but the nests of these birds are always in groups.

And not only in this way, but in the way of conversation, the Heron is a most social creature. It has infinitely more variety of voice and of intonation than the Rook. The sounds, indeed, that come from a heronry in spring, especially after the young birds are hatched, are inimitable and indescribable. A peculiar mode of speech by a clappering of the mandibles of the bill is varied by croaks, groans, coughing noises, and occasional screams as if the triumphs of the chase were the subject of animated rehearsal and of joyous conversation.

The young are inured to patience from their birth; for, as the parents do not catch very frequently, the young have long intervals to wait for the coming morsel. This they do, as soon as their soft legs are sufficiently hardened to support them, by standing on the platform of sticks which forms the nest for hours together in the queerest attitudes of patient meditation.

Nor have I ever seen in a heronry any indication of that rapturous and clamorous welcome which is accorded to the old Rook when he comes with food to wife or children—fluttering of wings and loud cawings, and every sign of intense excitement. With Herons everything seems to be sedate, calm, and dignified, as becomes birds whose pursuits are all connected with quietness and patience.

There is, however, another phase of the Heron's life in which it does condescend to exhibit the emotion common to all other creatures in the season of courtship and of love. All who have seen the attitudes of Cranes and Flamingoes in the spring as they are exhibited at the Zoo must have been amused by the ungainly attitudes of dancing and prancing in which the long-legged birds express their feelings. The Heron has somewhat



AWAY FROM THE POOL OR THE SHORE THE HERON IS ONE OF THE MOST SOCIABLE OF BIRDS

similar habits, as might be expected from the structural alliances between the two families of the Herons and the Cranes.

In her ordinary flight the Heron tucks herself up very neatly. Her long neck is folded back, the head resting on the back, and the bill resting on a fold of the neck. The long legs are stretched behind in a straight line with the axis of the body, so that the two upper feet appear behind the tail as if they were a long rudder. But in the season of courtship the Heron launches out into the air with legs and neck straggling in all directions, wheeling in awkwardly executed circles round the nesting trees, and even pretending at moments to float or soar—an attempt which is very ungainly, and is not redeemed by the hoarse croaks, cries, and screams by which it is often accompanied.

On one occasion only have I seen the staid equanimity of the Heron disturbed, not by the connections of the spring-time and of love, but by rage and fear. It was on one of the many occasions when I have had the honour of being Minister in attendance on the Queen at Balmoral.

The valley of the Dee is separated from the parallel valley of the Don by a ridge of hills which varies much in elevation. Immediately above the Castle of Balmoral this ridge is low, and is crossed by an easy road from one valley to the other. I was leaving the Castle in an open dogcart, in company with the late General Grey, for the purpose of going up the valley to the Old Bridge of Dee to fish the salmon pools near Invercauld.

Soon after leaving the door I noticed a large, heavy bird with a slow, flapping flight coming over the low pass from the valley of the Don, and making for the Dee. At first I thought it must be a Heron, but as it approached I saw that it was dark in colour, and could only be some kind of eagle. On it came, steering a steady course towards the river until it came above it, when it suddenly stopped and hovered, as a Kestrel hovers in the air when searching a field for mice.

This manœuvre at once revealed what the stranger was: it was the Osprey, or fishing eagle. Never having seen an Osprey before I was intensely interested, and hoped to see a successful plunge into the Dee, and the lifting of a salmon clutched in the Osprey's powerful talons. But his sport and my interest were alike spoilt by a Heron.

She had been standing in the bed of the Dee somewhere close to the pool over which the Osprey hovered, and was terribly disturbed by the dreadful apparition. I do not know whether

the Osprey ever attacks other birds. But his weight, the tremendous grasp of his claws, and the accuracy of his plunging swoops upon fish, would undoubtedly enable him to deal a death-blow on the back of any bird which he might choose to assail.

Such, at all events, seemed to be the instinctive dread of the Heron, which evidently thought herself very unsafe except when flying. She, therefore, rose from the bed of the Dee, screaming with fear and anger, legs straddling, neck extended, wings flapping wildly, and shaped a course of wide circles round the Osprey, some wheels in the air passing very near the eagle.

Although, of course, the Osprey could entertain no fear of the Heron, it evidently thought her such a scolding bore that it sheered off, and to my great disappointment flew back in the direction whence it came. It is the only grudge I ever had against a Heron—that this one deprived me of the great interest of seeing an Osprey at work in catching salmon in a clear rapid river.

There is one other particular in which the Heron is a bird of great interest, and that is its peculiar machinery of flight. Its wings are enormous in proportion to its weight, and its wing-strokes are singularly slow and heavy.

Few persons have ever observed the excessive rapidity of the wing-strokes of almost all other birds. In many cases the rapidity is so great that the eye cannot follow or count the strokes. Even the common Rook has a wing-stroke which it would be impossible to count; whilst in the case of ducks and divers, and many others, the rapidity is wholly confounding.

At first sight it looks as if the flaps of a Heron's wing are so slow that it would be the easiest thing in the world to count them. Yet when we come to try we find that it needs the closest attention to do so, and that the flaps somewhat exceed one in each second—that is to say, the downward stroke of the wing is repeated more than sixty times per minute. But as for every downward stroke there must be a previous upward or lifting stroke, it follows that the muscular exertion is repeated at least one hundred and twenty times in the minute.

Of course the downward stroke is the only one which specially encounters aërial resistance, the structure of the wing—convex above, concave below—being specially contrived

to escape resistance in the one direction, and to utilise it in the other. But all this is a splendid object lesson on the mechanical theory of flight and the possibilities of aërial navigation.

Large wings and light bodies do not conduce to power and rapidity in flight. Quite the contrary. The Heron is one of the slowest and most lumbering of all fliers, just because in wanting weight, it wants that which alone gives momentum in flight. Heavy birds with the smallest possible area of wing are those which fly fastest.

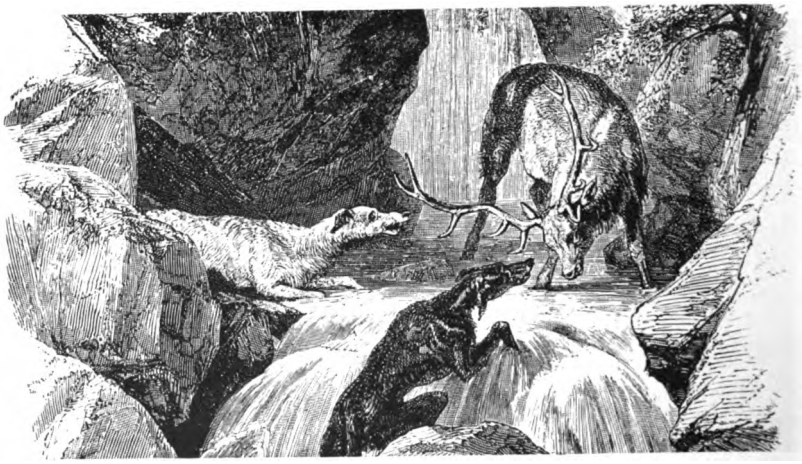
Of course that area must have a minimum. When it falls short of that minimum, as in the case of the Penguins and of the extinct Greak Auk, the bird cannot fly at all. But wherever the area of wing is just sufficient, when flapped with great energy and speed, to lift the bird's weight, then that weight is the main element in the velocity of flight.

This may be well seen in the common Guillemot, a bird closely allied to the Great Auk, but with this difference: that its wings, although very small in area, are yet just sufficiently large to lift the bird when flapped with a quite invisible rapidity. The flight of the Guillemot when once 'under way' is immensely rapid—certainly not less than sixty miles an hour, and probably much more. The Heron is the slowest of all our larger birds, just because its wings are, for the purpose of velocity, too large in proportion to its weight, and are not worked with any great energy of stroke.

Velocity of flight is of little or no value to a Heron, which does not feed on the wing. Her wings are only needed to carry her from one fishing station to another, and to carry a certain amount of weight in fish.

The eggs of the Heron are of a beautiful very pale blue, and the young are decorated from the first with a strange crest of downy plumes, which give them rather a grotesque appearance. The long legs take a long time to be developed and to harden into bone. This accounts for the considerable period that elapses before they can leave the nest to live for themselves. The eggs are laid in March, and quite at the end of May the young are still nestlings, though sometimes able to fly a little.

Altogether the Heron is a bird of great beauty, and of great interest among the feathered races. The European Heron is replaced in America by the Night Heron—somewhat smaller, but similar in structure.



REMINISCENCES OF THE ROCKIES

BY H. SETON-KARR, M.P.

FRESH from Oxford, I was walking down the Strand in the spring of 1876, when I saw a fine pair of Wapiti horns in the window of a gunmaker's shop. Wapiti heads were not so plentiful in London twenty years ago as they are now. The size and beauty of that particular head, the first of its kind I had seen, fairly astonished me. A year or so before I had killed my first red-deer stag in Norway. But here was a tined trophy that threw all possible red-deer heads into the shade, and aroused my most bloodthirsty instincts. Why is it, by the bye, that the size and beauty of wild stags, and other big game, create in certain individuals this lust to kill? In this civilised age this sequence of cause and effect may, to some minds, be difficult to understand. Place some educated and otherwise humane person, of the class I refer to, on a Scotch hill-side, a Norwegian fjeld, or on the pine-clad slopes of the Great Divide, with express rifle in hand, and a good stag, a fine reindeer buck, or an old wapiti bull in sight, and he will straightway be seized with an inordinate desire to slay the animal in question. This desire will increase in direct proportion to the size and beauty of the beast, and the difficulties and exertion entailed in the pursuit. It possesses at times all sorts and conditions of men. I have stalked and hunted

with Scotch gillies, with Norwegian natives, with Western trappers, and even with Red Indian chiefs, and I have noticed that the manifestation of this desire, allowing for individual and racial differences of temperament and training, is always the same. The Western trapper is usually profane, and the Red Indian taciturn. But the lust to kill is shared by all, accompanied by more or less suppressed excitement, and absolute indifference to all physical toil and exertion involved. I have known a middle-aged and respectable London magistrate crawl for a hundred

HUNTING CAMP ON THE MAIN DIVIDE

yards or more at full length through wet moss hags and peaty bog, drenched with perspiration, and shaking with excitement, in order to obtain a shot at a 'stag of ten.' I have known an Oxford graduate lie for hours on a Norwegian snow-fjeld waiting for a chance at a reindeer buck.

Failure or success in either case meant bitter disappointment or lasting joy; and it was all a question of taking the life of some beautiful creature. The mere desire to obtain venison or a good head does not satisfactorily account for these phenomena. We are driven to the conclusion that civilisation cannot efface man's

predatory instincts, and that the pursuit and slaughter of wild game is a perfectly natural, healthy and widespread trait of humanity, even necessary, in some cases, for health and happiness, and probably intended as an antidote to the purple and fine linen, and the sumptuous fare, of refined civilisation.

To return to the wapiti head in the London shop window. The effect on the writer was that in August 1877 I found myself, in company with a congenial friend and a pile of gun-cases and luggage, deposited at Fort Steele, in Southern Wyoming, intent on a hunt in the Rockies. Wyoming was at that time an ideal hunting-ground. The Main Divide runs through the centre of the State. From July to November the climate is magnificent. Twenty years ago, the cow-puncher and sheep-herder were comparatively unknown; and the rolling prairies, the pine-clad slopes and precipitous cañons of this Western land were the natural home of antelope and deer, *Ovis montana* and range grizzly, the shaggy buffalo and the lordly wapiti.

Fort Steele was our starting-point and base of operations. It was a military post at that time, situated on the Union Pacific Railway where it crosses the North Platte river. Although the altitude is 6,000 feet above the sea, the country at this point is singularly uninteresting. With the exception of a few cotton-wood trees along the river, there is no timber and little green grass. Rocky ridges and rolling plains covered with sage brush and brown bunch grass constitute the scenery. Only in the dim distance can be seen the high peaks of the Main Divide. Some fifty miles have to be traversed before the nearest point of the happy hunting-grounds is reached.

The usual hunting equipment in that country consists of a wagon and team to convey provisions, bedding, tents, and personal effects, and a good supply of riding horses, half-bred Indian ponies for the most part, hardy and enduring, and up to any amount of work at their own pace. Sometimes packhorses are substituted for the wagon. The advantage of a pack outfit is that almost any country can be traversed, and no semblance of a road or track is necessary, as in the case of a wagon. On the other hand, packing a horse is a very different business from loading a wagon. It took a friend and myself over a month to solve the mystery of the 'diamond hitch' and to put on a horse a pack that did not come loose in the first half-mile. I shall never forget our start with a pack-train for the Big Horn Mountains in 1878. We had nine pack-horses and, all told, six men. The first day we only made some six miles. Half a mile from the starting-point our pack-train, fresh to

the work, was scattered far and wide over the prairie, bucking their loads loose as they ran, with a light-hearted frolicsomeness very different from the same pack-train a month later, when, nose to tail, they sedately 'followed my leader' in Indian file over the roughest ground. But some packhorses always continue mean; our incorrigible on that trip was a piebald, wall-eyed, and ancient Indian pony, that never lost an opportunity of rubbing his pack against a tree, and regularly bucked his load once a week. On my first hunting-trip, in 1877, we were content with a commissariat wagon; and, having spent a day in buying provisions at

BREAKFAST IN CAMP

the dry-goods store, we went north from the railroad into what was then a comparatively unknown country, and enjoyed two months of pure and unadulterated bliss. The climate was perfect, game abundant, we were beyond the reach of letters, telegrams and civilisation, and could give the rein (in a sportsmanlike manner) to our predatory instincts without let or hindrance. Our object was to obtain good heads, especially wapiti, and, unless short of meat, only good heads were shot. The detailed incidents of camp-life in the Rockies are more or less monotonous to relate, and it is not my intention to inflict a sporting diary on the

patience of my readers, but merely to recall a few reminiscences from the half dozen or more hunting-trips I have made at different times in this part of the Rockies.

Of the many varieties of Western game, the prong-horned antelope of the plains is one of the most sporting. Twenty years ago antelope were ubiquitous on the rolling prairies and foot-hills of Wyoming. Hard to approach, quick-sighted and fast, they afforded the best possible rifle practice. The few antelope now left in this country are almost unapproachable. In the days of which I write one could generally ride to within a long shot, say 300 yards. An old buck's curiosity would usually detain him a few seconds and give a standing chance. I have often—where the shot was a long one—put in a successful second barrel after getting the range by seeing where the first bullet struck the dusty plain. As a consequence of continuous practice at antelope, in order to supply railway camps with venison, some of the Western trappers and ranchmen of twenty years ago were among the finest rifle-shots I have ever seen or heard of. It was just the case of the professional as against the amateur; of work done for a living as against the practice of a pastime. A bag of twenty or thirty antelope was not an uncommon morning's work for an old hand when the Union Pacific railway was being laid. I have known seven antelope out of a single small band killed in as many shots of a Winchester repeating rifle by an old Westerner; the first as it stood at over 100 yards, and the others as they galloped away. I have seen a single elk, standing endways, raked from stem to stern at over 400 yards by a bullet from an old Ballard rifle in the hands of another Western native; and these men thought nothing of these feats, and fully expected to accomplish them. On the other hand, I have known indifferent amateur shots spend a day among herds of antelope, and expend many dozens of cartridges, without touching a hair.

The best Western venison, and—to my mind—the poorest sport, is provided by the black-tail buck. This deer skulks in thick cover, carries a pretty but uninteresting head, and, when disturbed, usually rings. An orthodox stalk after a black-tail deer was most unusual. It was generally a question of riding through steep-sided cañons and along pine-covered hillsides, and shooting on sight when a buck was jumped. These animals depend largely on cover and concealment, rather than on speed (though they are fast enough), for safety. Once, when after elk, I rode round a rocky hill to within 80 yards of a fairly good black-tail buck standing under a large rock, and amid a few small trees.

He was in full sight and looking at us. We had plenty of venison, and did not want his head, and so rode on unheeding. The buck stood perfectly still and watched us out of sight without moving a muscle. He thought himself unseen, his grey autumn coat harmonising exactly with his surroundings. Had we stopped to take a shot, he would no doubt have been off at once, with the bounding springy gallop characteristic of these deer.

One of the last black-tail I killed, in 1894, was secured in a somewhat curious manner. We were camped on the Three

SNOWED UP ON THE MAIN DIVIDE

Forks of Snake River, late in the fall. The deer were all leaving the Main Divide for winter range on the Red Desert. Venison was necessary for our camp, and I was returning, with my hunter, after a long day's ride without having seen a single buck, though does were plentiful enough. We were close to camp, out of the good deer-ground, a disappointed pair of horsemen without any prospect of fresh meat for supper, when my eye was caught by a patch of grey on a bare hillside opposite, right on our path, and some 300 yards away. I put the glass on. Yes, it was a buck lying down and looking at us. We were

riding through a hollow, and partially concealed by trees. My companion, a Western hunter, would at first hardly believe it, until I gave him the glass. 'Yes, that's a travellin' buck, takin' a rest; and a good 'un he is, too.' By that time I was off my horse and seated on the ground, an elbow on each knee, and had drawn a full bead on the top of his shoulder. 'How far, Jack?' I whispered. 'Over 300 yards,' was the reply.

The first barrel cracked, and a puff of dust flew up a foot below the grey body. Quick as thought, as the buck was rising, the sight was raised a hair's breadth and the second trigger pressed. 'That fetched him,' said my companion, as the head fell prone. A lucky shot, this time a shade too high, had severed the spine. The body of that buck was brought in whole on one of our horses, to delight the eyes, and other bodily organs, of a hungry camp. I have occasionally tried, with success, riding in line with another rifle 200 yards apart, and a man between, through likely looking deer-ground. The deer ring, and, when started by one of the line, often run straight into the arms of another rider. The idea of a line of riflemen is not contained in their philosophy. The most artful buck has never calculated on this contingency, and does not understand or provide against it.

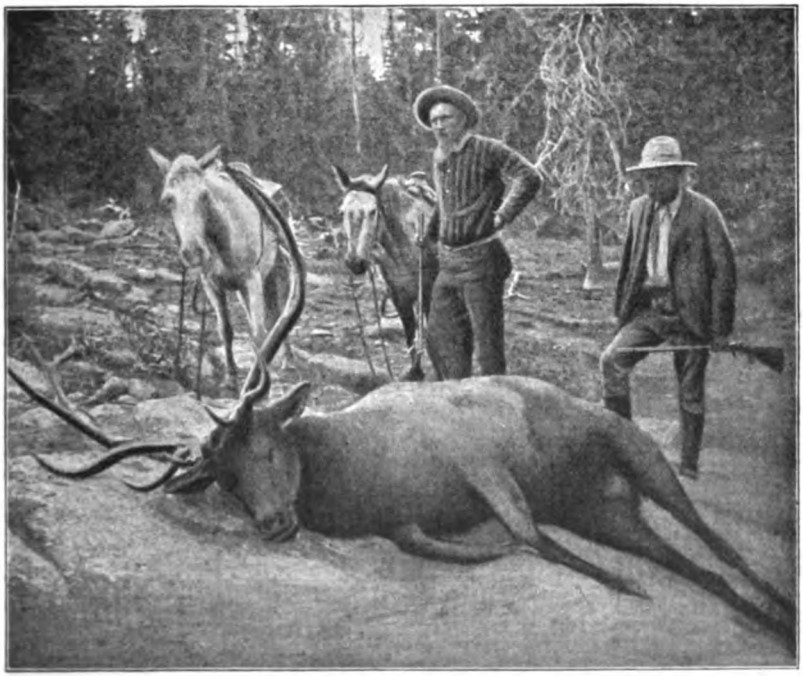
Now I come to the wapiti, locally miscalled elk, that one chiefly goes to the Rockies to kill. Black-tail buck and antelope are all very well in their way, and supply excellent food, but the coveted trophies of the chase are provided by the old bull-elk, those tined beauties that are *facile princeps* king of the red-deer tribe.

Twenty years ago these splendid deer ran in herds of thousands all through Northern Colorado and Wyoming. On my first hunting trip in Carbon County, Wyoming, in 1877, we started north from the Union Pacific Railroad into a country at that time little hunted, and then considered not entirely free from hostile Indians.

Three days out we camped at the foot of the Medicine Bow Mountains, then a magnificent game preserve, now nothing but a huge sheep and cattle ranche. As we got into camp that night, on a lovely August evening, we ran into three bull-elk, and, by dint of hard riding, secured a running shot as they were entering the thick pine timber, killing a fairly good twelve-point bull.

We were too late into camp to put up our tents, and made our beds on the prairie, at the foot of the range. Next morning, at sunrise, I was awakened by the cheery voice of our cook, and, rising from the blankets, saw one of the prettiest sights imagin-

able. A large herd of elk were just entering the mountains. They stood grouped about 200 yards distant, chiefly cows and calves, with the rising sun just showing over the horizon and lighting up their tawny yellow bodies, as they stared for a moment at our camp, and then made their way leisurely into the timbered hills. That particular herd contained no bull worth the killing, but I shall never forget the beauty of the picture they made. The old bulls in August generally run alone, and despise female society.



A FAIR HEAD

Later on that day I came across my first really fine old bull—or rather, seven of them—lying in a marshy hollow at the bottom of a steep valley. We came upon them suddenly, and, as they went up the hill on catching sight of us, I opened fire with a double ·500 express at 200 yards, and before they were out of sight had secured three twelve-pointers, two of them carrying exceptionally fine and heavy heads.

Our method of hunting in those days was casual in the extreme. Game was plentiful, and the ground did not require to be carefully spied. The size of the country, moreover, and the

altitude, some 7,000 feet, rendered stalking on foot a laborious and unprofitable exercise until the game was sighted. We had a good supply of riding horses, most of them trained to stand where left, and as sure-footed as cats. My friend and I would each day ride in company with a hunter in different directions from camp, meeting again at dusk to discuss the incidents of the day, at supper round the camp fire. We had, of course, our lucky and unlucky days. Some of the finest trophies of the chase are generally secured in a most unexpected manner. I rode one day with my hunter to a distant ranche, to get a supply of tea, of which we had run short. For some days previously I had had no sport worth mentioning. Returning from the ranche, we were riding round the base of a rocky hill, having seen no sign of elk, when a low whistle from the hunter behind me attracted my attention. I glanced round, and following his eye, saw a splendid pair of twelve-point antlers just visible above me over the near skyline. A fine old bull-elk was lying down about 200 yards above us, his horns betraying his whereabouts. I sprang from my horse, snatched the express from its sling, and hastened up the hill. A few steps over the brow would take me into sight and shot. Then a ridiculous *contretemps* occurred. I was nervously fingering the trigger and hammer of my double ·500 express, and by some mischance touched the wrong hammer and trigger together. Both barrels of the rifle went off, and so did the bull. Never before or since can I plead guilty to such a mistake. My temper was now fairly up. Hastily grabbing the rifle from the ground—it had flown out of my hands from the recoil—I dashed, breathless, over the ridge, and in the direction the bull had taken, loading as I went. Fortunately the ground was fairly open, and as I came over the first ridge, I caught sight of the bull-elk standing on the far side of a deep valley he had crossed. I had just time for a quick shoulder-shot before he vanished over the ridge, and—we found him dead the other side. That elk was evidently fated to be killed.

On another occasion, I went for a quiet afternoon's ride to look at some coyote traps we had set at the carcase of an elk. This was an unlucky day. On coming near the carcase, I saw a coyote, having sprung the traps, tearing at the meat. Leaving my horse in the cover of the pine timber, I crept up within shot, and just as I was pulling trigger the coyote, either hearing or winding me, galloped off. A running shot broke his hind leg, and without waiting to reload I ran forward on foot, thinking to get near enough to kill him with my revolver. As I came into

the open, one of the finest old bull-elk I have ever seen trotted majestically out of a grove of pine timber in front, and crossed the open park in front of me within easy range. His appearance was entirely unexpected. I grabbed hastily, and of course in the wrong pocket, for a cartridge, and, finally jamming one into the breech of the rifle, obtained a long snap-shot just as the magnificent brute, with spreading antlers laid well back on his haunches, disappeared into a belt of trees. I never saw him again, though the grand head he carried dwelt long in my memory. The wounded coyote, meanwhile, had of course disappeared. My cup of disappointment was not yet full. Returning alone to camp that evening I came across a small band of elk, accompanied by a fair-sized bull, though nothing like the patriarch I had just seen and missed. Leaving my horse, I this time accomplished a scientific crawl, and obtained an easy shot at 100 yards. It was getting dusk, and I must have sighted too high, as the sequel will show. At the crack of the rifle, the bull fell prone, legs kicking in the air. For the moment my bloodthirstiness was appeased. I went back to my horse and led him down to the prostrate elk. He had fallen close to a thick belt of young pine trees, and was still kicking spasmodically. As I came within ten yards or so he suddenly regained his legs, and plunged headlong into the thick timber before I could drop rein and raise my rifle. He vanished from my ken, and I have never seen him since. He had been simply creased, *i.e.* shot too high, and just above the back-bone. The effect of such a shot paralyses for the moment, but recovery is rapid. An irritated and despondent sportsman returned silently to camp that night.

The finest bull-elk I ever shot was driven towards me unconsciously by a friend. We were out after elk on the Rim of the Hole, as it is termed, a well-known volcanic hollow near the Medicine Bow Mountains of Wyoming. The sides of this depression are clothed with pine trees and quaking asp, and many years ago were a certain find for elk. I had ridden for some miles along a game trail half way up its slope, and, being in want of meat, had shot a small 12-point bull-elk. Finally, we emerged on the open prairie above. As we did so I saw three bulls, one very large, making over the prairie straight in our direction, and we just had time to slip into a hollow and leave our horses. My friend, I knew, was out in that direction, and the bulls had evidently been disturbed by him. It subsequently appeared that he had never even seen them. They had got his wind. They finally ran past us—a long shot—and I had a fair chance at the

largest at 200 yards, and evidently hit him. He disappeared over the Rim. We followed on foot, and saw two of the bulls making off in the distance. Where was the third? My hunter had been some way behind when I took the shot, and was slightly sceptical as to the hit. We spent some time in endeavouring to find the track or trail of blood in the pine groves below the Rim, but failed. Returning up a hollow, in thick cover and on foot, a monstrous pair of horns arose in front of me. My old bull, badly hit, had lain down just out of sight in the cover over the edge of the hill. A snap-shot through the trees failed to stop him, and he disappeared in the thick wood, to appear in the open some hundreds of yards away. He slowly made his way into a second gulch and disappeared. We followed cautiously, and, coming to the second gulch, jumped a range grizzly bear and three cubs, who galloped rapidly through the cover below. The temptation was not to be resisted. I got in six shots before they were out of sight, killing the old she bear and one cub, the remaining two cubs getting clear away. But the old bull was nowhere in sight, and, to my dismay, I found I had only one cartridge left. We climbed the far side of the gulch, and there, in the next hollow, lay the elk, evidently in *articulo mortis*. A bullet from my last cartridge through the neck finished him. The following were his dimensions and horn measurements:

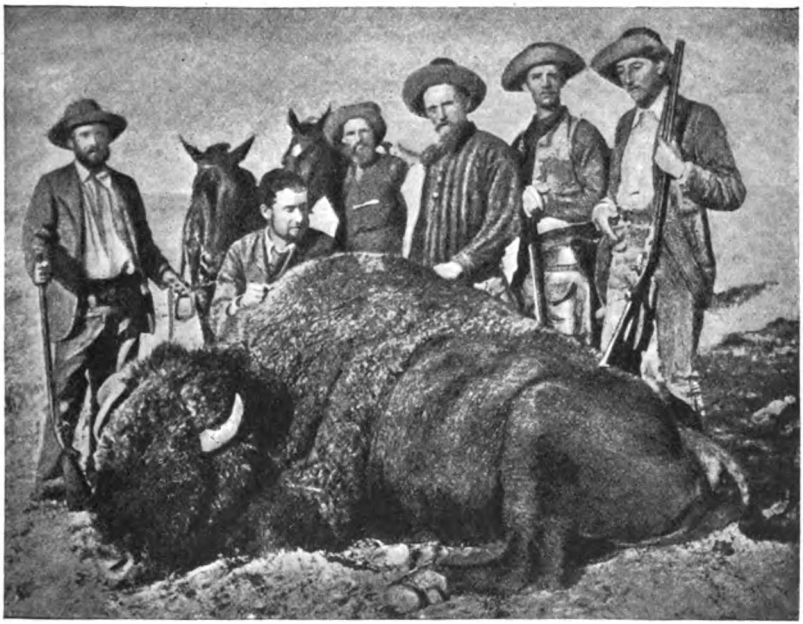
Height at shoulder	5 ft. 4 in.
Girth behind shoulder	6 ft. 2 in.

HORNS

Length along curve	61 in.
Beam or circumference between bay and tray .	8 in.
Span	52 in.
Number of points	12

A word, now, about the buffalo (American bison). These characteristic animals, formerly running in millions on the Western plains, are now, like the mammoth and the dodo, things of the past. Twenty years ago we ran them on horseback till we tired of the sport. I was content to kill some half-dozen bulls in '77, '78 and '80, and might have killed hundreds. An old bull-buffalo, after the first novelty had worn off, always appealed strongly to my compassion. The ferocity of his shaggy-fronted appearance is at first appalling, but is in reality an imposture of the most transparent kind. A good horse can run down a buffalo in a mile

or so, and the animal is at your mercy. He has neither the activity of the elk nor the natural weapons of the grizzly. Once only do I remember failing on horseback to catch a buffalo. It was down a long stretch of gently sloping prairie, and I ran my favourite horse to a standstill without getting within shot. Up any kind of hill his heavy fore-hand rendered a buffalo useless in front of a horse. Moreover, his size and dark shaggy coat made him conspicuous, and easily picked up at any reasonable distance on the prairie. Concealment was out of the question, as these animals always frequented the open. I have heard of the Rocky



AN OLD BUFFALO BULL

Mountain wood-bison, but I never saw one. I once photographed an old bull-buffalo as he stood mortally wounded and full of impotent fight on a stretch of Wyoming prairie. The 'boys' on horseback formed an appropriate background. The deed was deliberately done and I do not attempt to palliate it. We were coming into camp one afternoon, when a buffalo was seen grazing in a hollow a mile or so away. We stalked, wounded, and ran him to a standstill in a couple of miles. The cook galloped in the rear with the camera slung on his back, and after some slight display of impatience on the buffalo's part, a charge on the

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camera being even attempted, his portrait was duly transferred to a plate. This accomplished, he was promptly slain, again photographed, and his head now adorns a Scottish home.

A more interesting and dangerous animal than the buffalo is the grizzly bear. Under the head of range grizzly I include the silvertip and the cinnamon. They all possess the grizzly characteristics—a big head and long five-inch claws on the fore-feet. Also a violent temper when injured or provoked. The black bear is a smaller, scarcer and comparatively harmless variety with smaller head and short claws. The ferocity of the grizzly has of course been exaggerated. Like all animals under the sun he possesses an instinctive fear of man, but if wounded, cornered, or disturbed at close quarters at a meal, will occasionally, if full-grown, attack headlong anything or anybody. In the days of the old muzzle-loading rifle the danger was naturally greater, and in the case of a charge all depended on the one shot. But no soft-skinned animal, even the large Californian grizzly, if the country is fairly open and one can see to shoot, is able to live before a breech-loading rifle in the hands of any man who knows how to use it. In the autumn of 1878 I bagged thirteen grizzlies, old and young, by fair stalking, to my own rifle, in the Big Horn mountains of Wyoming. On one occasion only did I have any trouble with 'Old Ephraim.' We unexpectedly disturbed a large old male at his lunch off the carcase of a dead elk. He resented our intrusion and promptly charged, all hair, claws and teeth, before I had fired a shot. Thanks to the killing powers of a double ·500 express rifle this grizzly eventually died within six feet of me—a great deal closer, in fact, than I at all desired. It was, in truth, a duel to the death, a case of my life or his; for there is no compromise or hesitation about a grizzly's attack. When on the fight he means business, and never pauses or hesitates for a moment. His object is to get to close quarters as quick as possible. As one blow of a grizzly's paw can break a buffalo's back or tear out all his ribs, it is necessary to kill him before he comes within striking distance. In this instance the assault on his part was all the more wanton and unprovoked as we were stalking quite a different bear at the time, and had disturbed this one entirely by chance. I got the other bear shortly after, as it was one of our lucky days. This attack was, of course, an exceptional case. A bear in the open is easily seen, and our usual procedure was to see him before he saw us, take particular care to approach up-wind within point-blank range unobserved, and then hit him in the right place. Under these

circumstances, grizzly had no fair chance. Before he knew our exact whereabouts he was usually dead.

After a country has been hunted for a year or two, bears become extremely difficult to find, frequenting thick fallen timber, and only coming out at night. On several subsequent hunting expeditions one or two large bear-traps formed part of our outfit. I do not apologise for their use. We set them by a dead elk or deer, carefully concealed, and my only regret is that I never saw a large grizzly five minutes after he had put his foot in the trap. These traps were no trifles. They weighed 40 lbs. a-piece, and took two men and a long lever to set, and were attached to a log by a short chain and ring. The signs of a successful catch were unmistakeable. The trap, of course, had disappeared along a trail easily followed and marked by uprooted trees, torn-up ground, and sometimes the log to which the trap had been attached torn into chips and toothpicks by the infuriated animal's teeth. A cautious advance along the trail was very necessary, as a full-grown grizzly in thick cover, with his temper completely upset, was an awkward animal to come suddenly upon. Even a 40-lb. trap on his foot makes surprisingly small difference to the activity of a full-grown specimen of this powerful animal. One of the largest bears I have ever shot was trapped in this way. On arriving at the bait, we found a scene of desolation—young trees uprooted, the ground torn in all directions, the log of the trap in splinters, and the trap itself gone. We finally found the bear, after a long trail, in a furious temper at the bottom of a deep and thickly wooded valley. Fortunately, he was below us, and there was plenty of time to shoot as he charged uphill.

We once caught a skunk in a bear-trap. Nature has endowed this beautiful but most hateful and obnoxious little animal with an awful weapon of defence, against which anything with olfactory nerves is helpless. I have seen a dog howl with agony after attacking a skunk. Fortunately, a skunk only emits its odour when assaulted. The animal knows its power well. It will walk into a ranche as if the house belonged to it, and the only thing to do is to leave it severely alone. Presently, after sampling the groceries, it may depart. If slain, the building straightway becomes uninhabitable, and, moreover, all the skunks for miles around will flock to the funeral. Whenever I caught a skunk away from any habitation I promptly shot it and ran away, actuated only by motives of revenge. For I never forgot or forgave the skunk that compelled us to take its carcase from that bear-trap, and left us the lingering memory of its presence for the

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rest of that hunting trip; for the bear-trap had to be taken in the wagon.

On off-days our milder relaxation was trout fishing. The streams on the west side of the Divide all held good trout, running up to 3 lbs. in weight, voracious and simple-minded to a degree. I once stood below a glassy pool in a mountain stream on the Main Divide, and for a quarter of an hour hooked a trout, and sometimes two, at every throw. The tackle was strong and the flies large. I had sixteen speckled beauties on the grass, when the rise apparently ceased. I climbed the bank over the pool, and could see every stone in the bottom. Not a trout was left. I had caught every fish the pool contained. The streams in the Big Horn Mountains were usually dammed by beaver and lined with thick brush, in which bear-sign was plentiful. A rifle was often part of the fisherman's kit. On one occasion, going through the brush to a beaver pool, the rush of a heavy animal through the thick cover, and an ominous 'woof-woof,' betokened the presence of a grizzly, and sent my heart into my mouth. The thickness of the brush gave the rifle no fair chance. In this case, fortunately, grizzly had an engagement elsewhere. I am glad to say I never jumped a fighting grizzly in thick cover. The little difficulty I have already mentioned occurred in comparatively open ground.

These beaver pools always held the best trout, but the fish occasionally preferred a meat diet. One of our party was a long-haired, buckskin-clad old trapper, who looked with scorn on my ten-foot Farlow rod, gut cast, and lock-trout flies. A willow pole, string, and eel-hook were good enough for him, with a chunk of bear-meat in his pocket whence he cut his baits. On our first fishing picnic we had a friendly contest. I was simply not in it. Half the water was unfishable with fly, owing to the thick brush surrounding it. I was hung up at every other cast. But the old trapper was in his element. His bait was slung with a splash into a beaver pool, the smartest trout would promptly seize it, and the next moment find himself jerked violently on to the bank, or perhaps into the top of some tall pine-tree. The trapper caught as many pounds as I did ounces. After this, except in open water, the Farlow tackle was discarded for the fishing pole and bait. Where the water was open, the fly more than held its own.

In conclusion, I will relate the incidents of perhaps the most sporting day amongst Western big game that I have ever enjoyed. We were camped in the heart of the Big Horn Mountains in

1878, 200 miles from the nearest habitation, and in a country never before visited by hunting parties. For some days I had been unlucky, and seen little or no game worth killing. That morning my hunter and I started for a lofty peak on the west of the Divide in search of 'sheep,' the coveted big-horn, or *Ovis montana*, of the Rockies. About 10 A.M. we sighted through the glass a band of rams on the top of the said peak, and proceeded to stalk them. On the way we ran across almost every kind of Western big game, because, I suppose, we did not want them, and on the principle that 'it never rains but it pours.' First, a

A SUCCESSFUL HUNTING TRIP

fine old buck antelope, then a couple of buffalo-bulls, and, a little further on, one of the finest black-tail bucks I have ever seen. This latter animal simply would not get out of our way. At the foot of the hill we saw, and spent some little time in watching through the glass, a large band of elk with two bulls in charge, who were settling their differences—it was the commencement of the rutting or 'whistling' season—by a fight. All these animals were left severely alone. We wanted some big-horn heads just then, and nothing else would satisfy us. Arriving at the top of the hill, a rocky eminence sparsely covered with stunted pine timber, a cautious approach on foot brought us

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to within 150 yards of four fine old ram sheep of the largest kind, and presently one lay dead with an express bullet through the heart, and a second, desperately wounded, went over the ridge. The excitement was not all over yet. 'See here!' said Jack, my hunter, seizing my arm and pointing to the left. A band of some fifteen or twenty more rams, startled by the shots, had run out of a hollow on the left, and stood for a moment clustered in a bunch at 300 yards. Picking out one of the finest heads, a third lucky shot tumbled over another old ram with a broken neck, and the rest of the band promptly disappeared round the shoulder of the hill. I followed at a run on foot, and, getting another sight of the herd, wounded a third and pursued him down the hill into a rocky ravine. By this time the rarefied air —at an elevation of something like 8,000 feet above the sea— began to tell, and it was a very broken-winded biped that arrived at the edge of that ravine, where I jumped a half-grown grizzly out of the brush below me, and missed him handsomely as he galloped away. Of the two wounded rams, I recovered one as I returned. He had lain down a little higher up, amongst some rocks. I now had three heads, which measured from thirty-six inches to thirty-nine inches along the curve. We thought of lunch, and, returning to the horses, rode down to the stream at the foot of the hill. On the way we spied my fourth ram, standing alone on the far side of the hill, evidently wounded. I crawled through the rocks to within easy shot, drew a careful bead behind the shoulder, and pressed the trigger. The ram ran away as if untouched, and, deeply disgusted, I went to the spot, and found a perfect pool of blood. The tenacity of life of these animals is extraordinary. I followed a plain blood trail for 300 yards at least before finding my fourth ram stone dead. The last bullet had gone through him, a trifle too high, just over the heart. We returned to camp in triumph that night, with two fine 'sheep' heads dangling from the sides of each of our horses. Shortly after, we were compelled to return south, owing to a band of hostile Indians, who passed our camp, fortunately without discovering it, the country being very rough and thickly wooded. Our guides insisted on our return, and we left, with deep regret, what was then a Western paradise of game.

FOOTBALL BY AN OLD RUGBEIAN

BY E. F. T. BENNETT

ABOUT thirty or forty years or so ago the game of football was nearing its highest state of perfection at Rugby School in the particular style adopted there, and that this was a good one is evident from the spread of the game, planted as it was in different parts of the country by enthusiasts from the Big School. The Big School meant the Grammar School, and all other schools near looked upon it with an awe known only to boys.

To join the Big School was indeed to enter upon a new life, and in those days a boy had to be ready for hard knocks round every corner. Fighting with fists still went on, but the active and game-playing life, though it made roughness common, was so healthy that, by tacit consent of the masters, the boys were entirely a self-governing body out of school.

Football was of all games the best suited for such a set of boys, played as it then was without umpires in a give and take spirit, which was encouraging to sport and fairness. The fifteen a side game that has descended to us from the original old game at Rugby is considered by most judges to be far more scientific, and in every way better than the old game; but the parent game may well be looked back to as a great one, seeing the hold that

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it had on the boys at school, and the wish to continue it after they had left. Shin kicking or hacking was still in full and painful force, and carried often to excess, but the original meaning of it was punishment for the abuse of the unwritten rules that were recognised in the days not long before the period we are now considering.

Running with the ball towards the enemy's goal was made legal in 1841–42, before which time it was regarded as worthy of severe punishment by hacking, and so hacking over became a science that lasted until the old form of the game was very greatly altered. A boy of the name of Ellis was the first to carry the ball towards the enemy's goal in 1823; for before he took upon himself to break through old custom, the rule was that on picking up the ball a player was bound to retire before taking his kick, the other side coming up to his mark, as is now still the rule.

The drop kick was no doubt a development of a rule that made throwing the ball down under certain conditions imperative, and then kicking it as soon as possible.

The shape of the ball may be traced to the fact that bladders were used as footballs not so very long ago, and Jim Gilbert is still alive to tell how he had to scour the country in search of these, as the demand for them was so great. I have myself seen him blowing up these unsavoury articles before the india-rubber bladder and pump were brought into use by Lindon. Jim used his great lungs long after this, and looks as if he could still do so.

Running with the ball and dropping, so peculiar to Rugby, were the foundation of the great game; in 1846 the first set of rules was brought out, and in these we can find the history of the present game.

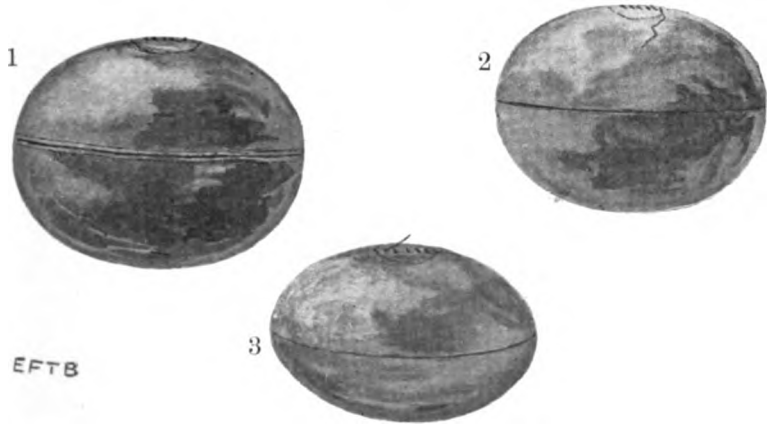
The first public attempt to stop shin kicking in a practical way was made somewhere about 1863 by a house that set itself the task of demonstrating that combined play had no need of hacking to make it successful, and fortunately for the improvement of the game this house scored a great victory over a shin-kicking team. Looking back now at the endurance and temper of the winning team, it is not too much to say that its efforts were heroic.

The Richmond Club set its face against hacking from the first, and being composed almost exclusively of Rugby men, our tempers were sometimes sorely tried by being hacked, especially as we knew how to inflict pain ourselves.

The house matches, with twenty a side, watched by a wildly excited crowd of partisans, were not decided until the regulation two out of three goals had been scored, goals alone counting as points in those days, and so it was not uncommon for a house match to last many days.

The penned team always had a chance of winning till the very end; and as Waterloo was won in this way, perhaps there may be something to be said in favour of goals alone being counted.

The fewer and simpler the rules that govern football are, the better the sport, for individuals can always be ready for a chance to distinguish themselves; and as Ellis was enabled to invent



FOOTBALLS: 1, BIG SIDE BALL; 2, MATCH AND PUNT-ABOUT BALL; 3, MODERN, PLUM-STONE SHAPED BALL

running towards the enemy's goal in the infancy of the game by the simplicity of the rules then in vogue, so too we might look for great improvements in the modern game by the adoption of the fewest rules possible. In the three great matches of the year any number might join in the game provided they had 'following-up caps,' were old Rugbeians or invited guests, or, being in their house twenty did battle on the two Cock Houses' side.

'The Sixth Match *v.* School' opened the season.

'The Old Rugbeians *v.* School' came next, and 'The Cock Houses *v.* School' ended up the season.

The Sixth Match was played in early autumn, and there were few finer sights to be seen than this on a bright day with the two sides drawn up for kick-off. The School all in white and The Sixth in striped jerseys, the bright velvet caps and white trousers,

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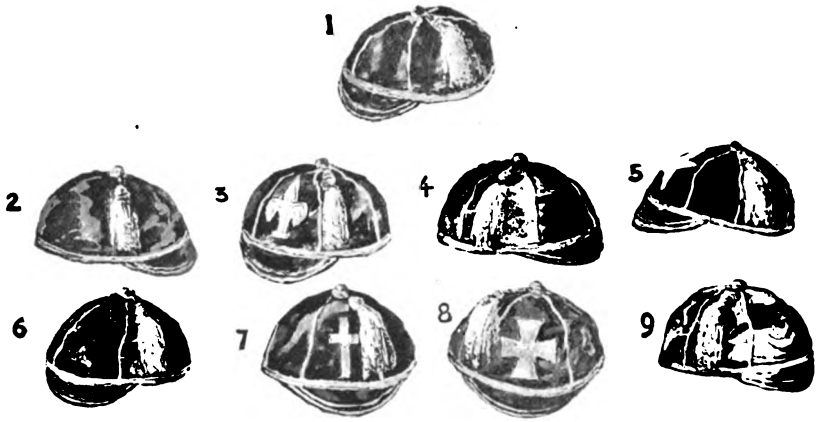
and the beautiful colouring of the trees, made a singularly fine picture. Many came for miles to see the game.

An examination of the sketch plan will make clear the conditions under which our great matches were played, and the group of three trees standing well out in the ground were always looked upon as about half way, though in reality they were nearer the School goal than the Island goal by about ten yards.



EFTB

VELVET FOLLOWING-UP CAPS

1. Town: purple and gold
2. School House: crimson and gold
3. Burrows': maroon and silver with fleur de lys
4. Blake's: light blue and silver
5. Mayor's: dark blue and silver with star
6. Smythies': green and gold
7. Bowden Smith's: black and silver with Latin cross
8. Evans': orange and silver with Maltese cross
9. Arnold's: cherry and silver with crescent

BADGES ON CLOSE-FITTING THIN COTTON JERSEYS

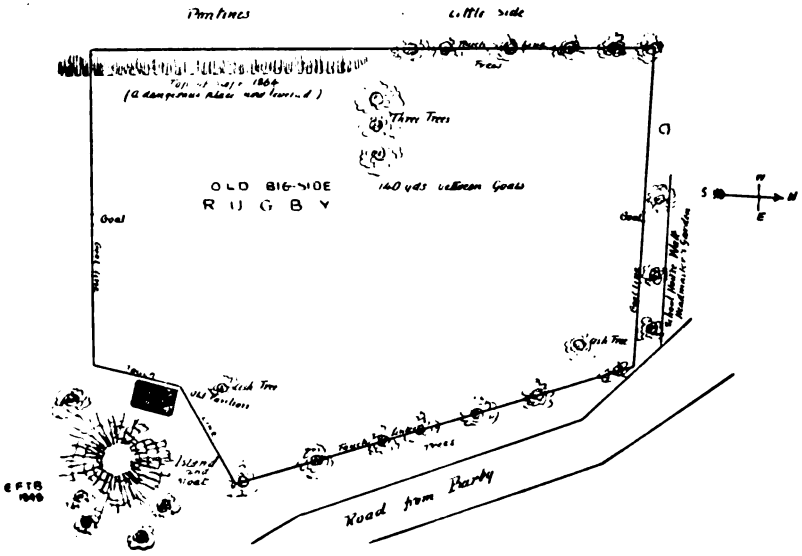
1. Lion rampant: purple striped or white jersey
2. Skull and cross bones: red striped or white jersey
3. Fleur de lys: brown striped or white jersey
4. Anchor: blue striped or white jersey
5. Five-point star: dark blue striped or white jersey
6. Oak leaf: green striped or white jersey
7. Latin cross: black and blue striped or white jersey
8. Two-headed eagle: orange striped or white jersey
9. Crescent: cherry striped or white jersey

These trees were the scene of great struggles, and by their help a losing team could recover its wind somewhat or keep the ball away from its goal for a longer time. The ash trees that were in the field of play were also often of use in enabling players to get under the ball before it fell to the ground.

Touch was regulated by the lines of trees, and on the Pontines' side of the ground was only a continuation of that line; the old pavilion, too, altered the line. There used to be a dangerous slope at a very sharp angle on one side of the ground; this has been long ago levelled down, but in the time we are now looking at, players tried in every way to prevent the ball getting down there.

The great extent of this ground made matches with large numbers on each side possible.

The ball being placed in the middle of the ground, the two sides face each other, and as there are perhaps one hundred and fifty players the sight is imposing. 'Are you ready?' shouts



the captain of the Sixth. 'Yes!' is the answer, and with a loud cheer the ball, kicked clean and hard, flies towards the School goal.

The tramp of more than a hundred players is exciting to the crowd of onlookers, and their interest is kept alive as long as they care to remain, for the game is full of that indescribable something that hunting, polo, and some other things possess. The School back sends the ball flying into the three trees under which the first scrummage (not scrimmage) forms itself. From branch to branch it drops, it is at last seized, and with the cry of 'Have it down!' the struggle begins in earnest.

The great scrummage sways here and there, and at last opens

out enough to enable players to dash at the ball. Thirty are forcing it towards the School goal, but in the midst of their rush are met by forty white jerseys, who force the ball back. A quick half-back pounces upon it and makes off through the bewildered and excited crowd. He has not gone far before a clever kick sends him headlong to the ground, and another scrummage takes place. The race has already tried many winds, so the ball is soon clear again, driven here and there, first by a kick off the ground, then by a drop; again it is snatched up and carried for safety behind the three trees, where some useful hide and seek can be done.

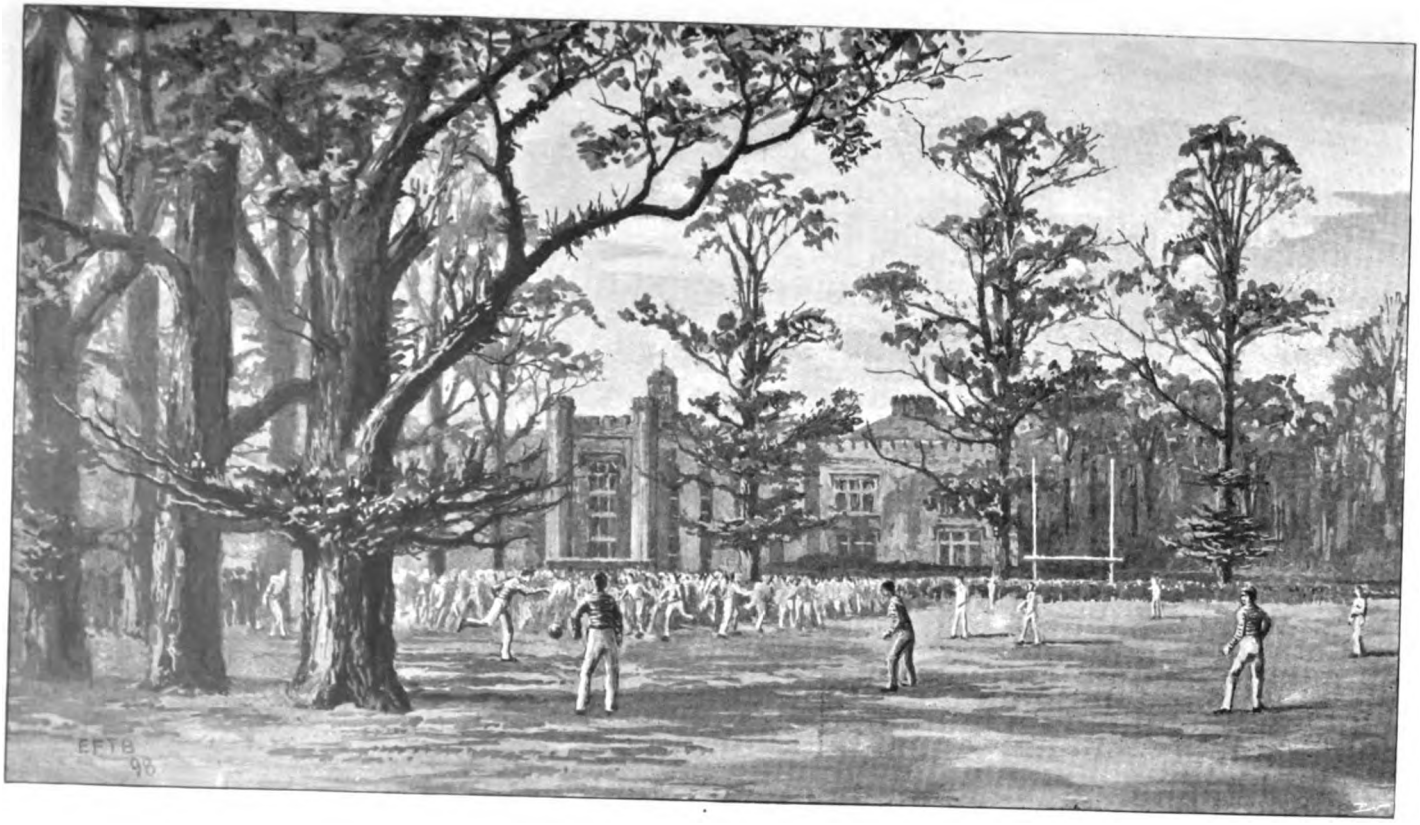
The field is studded with players, for the pace has so far been great, and any outlying man may find himself the chief actor at any moment.

The School rush together to form a new scrummage, and so too do the Sixth. Out goes the ball towards the Island goal, instantly a Sixth half-back takes his drop at the School goal from the three trees, and only misses scoring by a yard outside the goal-post. 'Well dropped!' is the shout as the School back carries the ball along behind the line under cover of the crowd of goal-keepers well away from danger, dashes into play near touch, and with a long drop makes matters again even. And so the battle goes on with only resting times when one side or the other has been compelled to touch down and kick off again at the 'quarter way post,' called now 'the twenty-five yards.' Two hours and more of such a game is enough for the most enthusiastic, and towards the end the Sixth are only driven out of the School goal by the assistance to their champions of a hundred or more goal-keepers, who dash into the scrummage on the shout of 'School to the rescue!' 'Shove out, School!'

Many a small boy gained his position as a player in such a match, for it required nerve to touch the ball down in front of excited big players; and to find yourself in a great scrummage before having played on Big Side was distinctly an alarming experience.

The first stroke of the chapel bell is the signal for 'No side' to be called, and it is a curious sight to see some of those, or perhaps all, for the service is quite voluntary, who are going to stay to the Communion next day, file into their places with torn jerseys, dirty trousers, and the marks of battle on them. It is very impressive to hear all join Dr. Temple, who is in the pulpit, in the Lord's Prayer, and a short address follows, ending up the service.

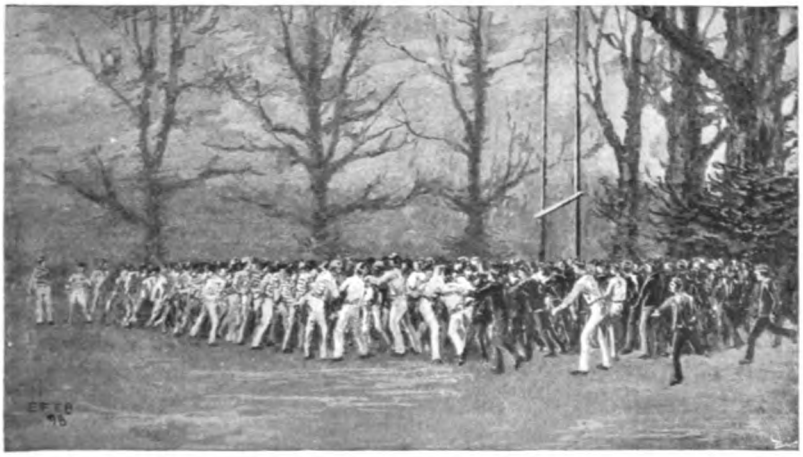
It may be well to explain that this voluntary service was as



TAKES HIS DROP AT THE SCHOOL GOAL

much a part of the Sixth match day as the match itself, and there are many who say that they look back to these services with the greatest pleasure. It will be noticed that the game was much the same as that so splendidly described in 'Tom Brown's School-days,' but no account of the period we are now considering would be complete without a reference to that great player, Charles Dakyns, commonly known as 'Pup.'

All who have ever played with this wonderful performer are unanimous in saying that never before or since has anyone come



SCHOOL TO THE RESCUE!

near him as a half-back, for his dodging and kicking were quite extraordinary. He could kick with either leg at full speed, or half-speed, or even standing, and at apparently any angle. He once kicked a goal when tackled by holding the ball well out by the lace, and this is a hint for good dropping; for unless the ball is held far out, the full sweep of the leg cannot be given. He kicked a goal with his heel when unable to face round quickly enough, and did things with the ball that certainly no one else ever has done.

As a runner no doubt many were faster, but his judgment and quickness enabled him to escape being tripped up, or hacked over, and, as far as I know, he never made a mistake.

In 1864 he kicked two goals in the Cock Houses' Match, and though I was unfortunate enough each time to miss the sight of the actual drop, I saw one piece of his play which ended in a goal, and it will quite describe his powers.

I was one of the five full-backs playing for the School. We had four half-backs and perhaps sixty forwards. Our side was, according to old custom, 'Whites;' the 'Stripes' were about the same number.

The Cock Houses had carried the ball to our side of the three trees, and here a great loose scrummage took place with players spread about everywhere. At last the ball came bounding out towards our goal, and as our halves had lost sight of it, it came to my turn to try to stop the rush. Seeing only the ball with a mist of charging Stripes close behind it, I ran forward with outstretched arms, and when on the very point of seizing it, a white figure dashed in front of me from the left, caught the ball, and disappeared behind the crowd of charging Stripes. Why he was not caught I cannot say, unless that zigzag style of running made him more like a ghost than real flesh and blood.

'Dakyns has got it!' 'Look out for Pup!' was the cry as all turned to join in the chase. It seemed an age to me before I heard the dull thump of a drop kick, for from where I was it was impossible to see anything. A wild yell from all the School goal-keepers, who came tearing along the field, showed what a goal was thought of in this great match, and such a scene could only take place where all were players. 'Goal, goal!' was the shout. 'Well dropped, Pup!' and the excitement did not calm down for many minutes, for such a run and such a kick had never been seen before.

Goals were changed, and although the Cock Houses strained every nerve to score, Dakyns was again too much for them, and dropped another goal. Such a feat as this has never been beaten, and it was a most absolute proof of the superiority of this player over all the others of his time.

Much might be written about his activity, for he excelled in every exercise that demanded nerve and judgment. Prisoner's base made him a dodger of the highest order, and there were few gates or hedges near Rugby that he had not cleared. His gate jumping was a very original performance, for if he missed getting over, he was able to catch the top bar under his knees, and so save a fall. Each failure made him the more determined to succeed, and here I cannot resist the temptation of describing one more of his feats.

Butler's Leap, near Rugby, was a very ticklish jump to attempt, the run being out of a narrow road, over a post and rail fence about two feet high, and across a twenty-foot brook, with a fall of about eleven feet. The great thing to do was just to clear the rail at full run, and Dakyns one day cut it too fine, and striking

the rail, fell on to his shoulder in the mud on the other side, and lay apparently stunned; but we were relieved to see him get up unhurt. He came quietly back, and after a rest cleared the jump well on to the other side.

The original idea of football at Rugby was to follow the ball, those who were considered the best players got 'following-up caps,' and at the time we are speaking of, 'Follow up' was constantly being called out by the captain of a side to hurry up any laggers. Back-players placed themselves where they thought they could be of most use to their side; the setting of the field with backs and half-backs was a development in the game, and such players as Dakyns made their positions regular ones for picked men. In his time backs and halves were set only just before kick-off, and not long before this period those who were going to play assembled on the field, and two captains chose sides, those not playing being sent to stand in goal. Indeed, picking up sides was common at Rugby as late as in 1860 among the younger players and the small schools near, and a haziness existed too as to the rules.

Good dropping can still sometimes be seen, but the generality of modern players do not care to learn to drop, because the practice is considered so dangerous in a match. Dropping at Rugby was continually practised, the trees being capital ball-catchers, and two sets of boys might almost always be seen standing near certain trees in the 'Pontines' close to Little Side, catching the balls as they fell down, and kicking them backwards and forwards.

Great accuracy was gained by this, because there was often a crowd at these spots, and it was an understood thing that the bodies of those near should be respected. Deliberate aim at another meant practical joking, and was seldom or never appreciated; consequently boys became very clever at just missing the heads of those in front of them.

Clubs might revive drop kicking by the use of nets, but as dropping at goal is not encouraged, such practice can hardly be hoped for. There are no doubt many 'long drops' still, but the bars on the soles of the boots, and the plumstone shape of so many modern balls, are not favourable to that long, low, rising kick that used to be seen in the days of smooth soles and rounder balls. Indeed, a golfer would only make a poor drive with a roughened sole to his club, and the football should take the course of a well-struck golf ball if perfection in dropping is aimed at.

The Big Side balls were half an inch larger every way than the ordinary ball (and this is a very vast difference), the ends were well rounded, and seventy yards was not at all an impossible kick; how few ever now think of trying at goal even from thirty yards! Foreign teams never visited Rugby at this time, for nowhere else was this particular game played, and many are ready to say that before rival teams travelled about the country to meet each other, sport and fairness of play were better understood. Exchange of meetings ought to improve play as long as sharp practice in constant appeals to the umpire is voted bad form.

The Eton wall game and Winchester net game show how football can adapt itself to any surroundings; this is exactly what it is meant for, and it would be pleasant to hear of some new school inventing its own game. But the schoolmaster is no longer his own master, and cannot leave the boys to themselves out of school; so, like a wise man, he makes use of the best means he can to have games that shall help him to keep the boys under close supervision without adopting espionage.

With regard to the pace of the modern game, and the short time possible for play under such conditions, it should be remembered that man is not well fitted for speed, and the faster the game becomes, the fewer will be the number of players that can hope to join. Indeed, in some matches a pocket-handkerchief might as well represent the ball (as far as football is concerned) as the ball used, for the last thing thought of seems to be kicking it.

The old game, with all its drawbacks, had plenty of good football in it, and to carry the ball through a great loose scrummage by dribbling was indeed a very high art, brought perhaps to the greatest perfection by Henry Hart. To see dribbling now we must go to an Association ground, but there is not the slightest reason why it should not be carried on more in the Rugby game, for players constantly lose by being unable to do it.

Old players look on now and wish they could in some way bring back the game-playing spirit as distinguished from the business aspect of most games nowadays, and more especially of football. It may be that the harder toil now expected from everybody makes too many onlookers against their will, for the Saturday half-holiday begins too late for most to be able to play. Worry and overwork will knock the life out of us if we make no stand against them; and unless more leisure is given, we must be content with our short gladiatorial spectacles, trying to forget

that not so long ago this was called Merry England, and that manly sports had ample time allotted for their practice.

We have only to be in a crowd now at a football match to know how few of the spectators have really been players themselves, for the coarse guffaw shows ignorance as to the danger of a severe fall, and this we hear too often. Games, in fact, cannot be of value to the nation as a whole until Saturday is made a whole holiday by law, to be followed by a mid-week half-holiday, when some wise man has arisen and taught us how to reduce the unnecessary toil that now presses so hard on us all.

Till then we must rest content, or not, with what we have now in the way of cricket and football and other recreations, that can at present only be properly carried on by a very few people.

I have been enabled to obtain accurate information from Old Rugbeians, and also from a Report by the Old Rugbeian Society on 'The Origin of Rugby Football,' and for any remarks as to the game before I knew it I have to thank that pamphlet.

Football was not considered a wet day game at this time, the main reasons for this being that the ground got cut up too much, and the ball was too wet to kick properly. Of course matches were played when unavoidable on wet days, but the head of the School took care that this should be exceptional, and bad days did very well for paper-chases, Big Side runs across country, and so on.

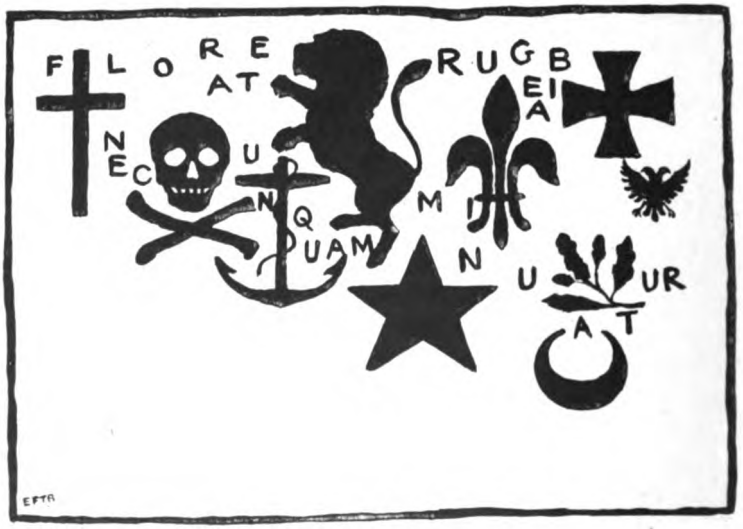
The Rugby boy was always running; he raced after first lesson to put his name down for the racquet court; he raced to secure a pitch for his cricket net, and pushed a paper with his name on it into the hole where the middle stump would be; he trotted out a mile or two when bent on some adventure with a friend, so as to have as much time as possible for it before school met again. He had to run to be in time for prayers in the Big School unless he was in the School House—in fact, he was always running, and as each lesson only lasted an hour or two, intervals were frequent, and he was pretty sure to do some running then.

Football was essentially a dry-weather game, as indeed most games of skill are; but though, like cricket and golf, it can be played in the wet, the highest art can seldom then be brought out.

As to the science attainable by those who played on a crowded field, books might be written to show how much this was, but one example of a back-player and one of a forward has only been taken to show what could be done. Back play meant good running and certain dropping, and forward play persistent effort and quickness of foot; and in a scrummage of a hundred players

the difficulty of 'carrying the ball through,' as it was called, was only conquered by the best manly qualities. All of us in those days, men and boys, used to *play*, but now we are compelled to strain our utmost to beat record, and do something to make our names look well in print.

Let any club or any school try what *playing* really means. Let their first rule be that their doings shall not be made public; they will then find out again what sport for the love of sport really is, and will in no wise be losers of pleasure and profit thereby.



GOLD COAST GOSSIP

BY GUY CADOGAN ROTHERY

It may appear rather bold to suggest the Gold Coast as a delightful place for a sportsman to spend a holiday, but an enthusiastic official, with the coolness born of lengthy experience, avers that the western shore of the Dark Continent is not so black as it is painted. My friend declares that if a man leaves the seaboard for the hills he may enjoy very tolerable jaunts, and, if not too greedy, find work for both rod and gun. It is so pleasant to come across a Crown Colony Mark Tapley, that it occurs to me that others besides myself may be interested in Gold Coast sporting gossip. This thought emboldens me to string together some of the gun-room chit-chat which enlivens his correspondence.

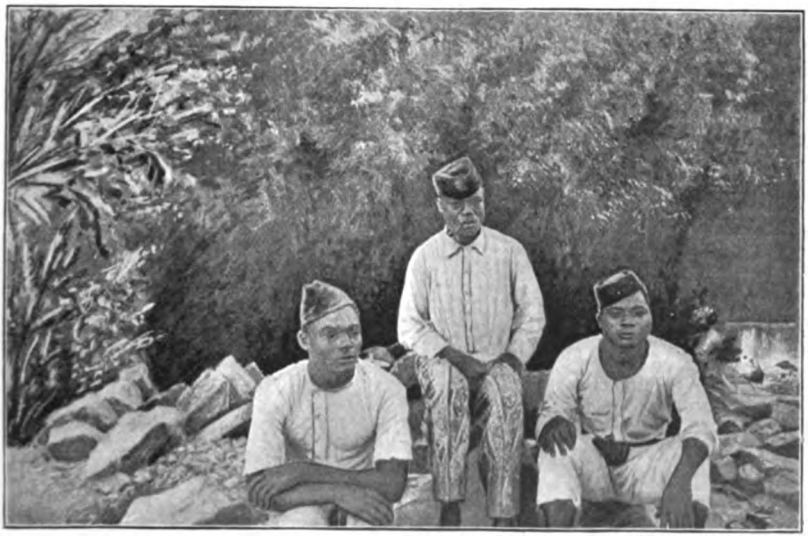
With the general subject of life in the region over which he rules with the benevolence of an attenuated autocracy, he says: 'It is popularly supposed that life on the Gold Coast is equivalent to banishment from civilised society—that a man or woman might as well be in Mars, or at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean, as under the pitiless glare of a West African sun. Yet, I assure you, sensible folks can enjoy themselves excellently well out here; the scenery is beautiful, the colony has had an eventful history, and many vestiges of the Portuguese and Dutch rulers

may still be found in the ruined fortress or the existing strongholds of Elmina. No doubt housekeeping presents certain difficulties, but good black servants are procurable, and the markets are fairly well supplied. Then, men who are not averse from "killing things," though preferring to do so after stiff tramps amid exquisitely varied scenery rather than at a grand battue, will find plenty of scope for their energies.' The advantage of Elmina as a port of call is that, unlike other parts of the colony, ships may approach easily, and debarkation may be accomplished in ordinary rowboats, whilst at other points the jagged reefs make an exciting race in a surf-boat imperative.

In the hills and dales behind Elmina, densely clothed with gigantic cotton-trees, palms and luxuriant undergrowth, with but small patches cleared for cultivation, good cover is afforded. 'To me one of the chief attractions of sport out here is its diversity. Whilst you at home have particular haunts for snipe, grouse, partridges, and pheasants, here in a limited area are jumbled together a far greater variety of game. There is always the joy of the unexpected; the cooing woodpigeon in the topmost branches of gigantic trees; on approaching the borders of a plantation you are startled by a covey of partridges rocketing out of thick underbush; a little further on quail scurry over an arid patch of ground, leading you to a stream running by a cassava field with its tender young shoots, where, likely enough, a harness deer may be discovered at breakfast on the green leaves. Crossing from one plantation to another, divided by a thicket, a porcupine will suddenly face the intruder, manifesting marked aversion as it bristles in defiance. "Ground pig" hiding near by, finding it getting rather warm, bolts for the woods. Emerging from the thick bushes a cornfield is at hand, and broken ears reveal the recent presence of marauding monkeys. On the coast, amidst the reed-hidden lagoons, are the haunts of curlew, snipe, and duck. For leopards and hyenas, buffalo and wild boar, the upper and less frequented reaches of the Surowee stream must be visited, where, too, many species of deer, and the queer, not altogether unpalatable, iguana will be found.' It would appear, however, that the cultivation of a philosophic spirit is advisable; the fat must be taken with the lean, for in those rough regions the glorious uncertainties of fortune must be reckoned with.

The Busum Prah, the 'Sacred River' of the Ashantees, is worth exploring. At its mouth nearly a quarter of a mile broad, it rapidly diminishes in size as one follows its banks to the hills.

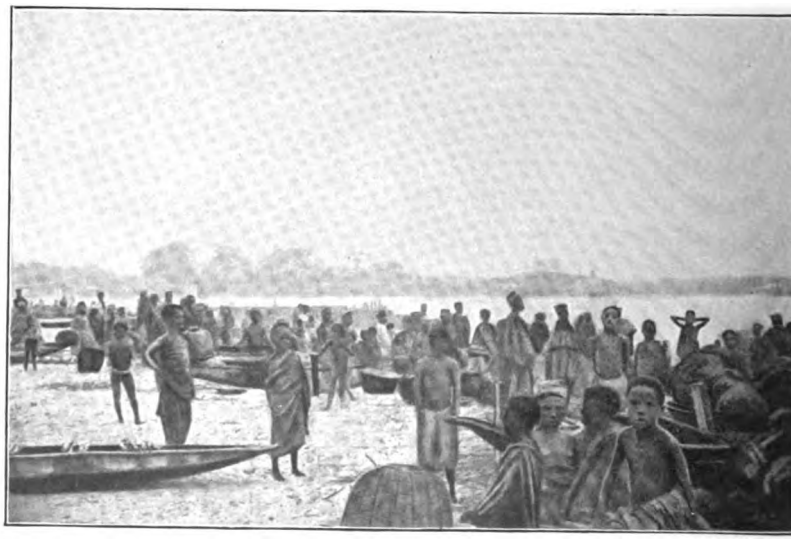
On the lower reaches the mangrove flourishes luxuriantly, and from behind their huge trunks pot shots at crocodiles may be indulged in. This is a form of sport not without its excitement, for the amphibians are cautious and offer few vulnerable spots for the gunner's aim. As the stream narrows the surrounding vegetation becomes more varied and pleasing, feathery palms being decorated with great loops of wild vines, white jasmine and other creepers, some of which form cord-like bridges from bank to bank, which monkeys know how to appreciate. Here, grazing under feathery fern trees, may be seen deer of several varieties, while green pigeons and parrots fly from one tree-top to another.



KRU BOY CARRIERS

As a rule travelling is accomplished in hammocks, carried by the athletic natives, whose sinewy black bodies and muscular limbs seem to be proof against fatigue. It would appear that this method of transport is by no means unpleasant when well-matched bearers are chosen, who trip along over rough ground and up hill with a regular swing, which imparts if anything a rather soothing motion to the hammock. If advantage is taken of early morning much ground can be thus covered without inconvenience, so that the gunner feels quite equal to long trudges after game, especially if he is careful to shun the open during the heat of the day, seeking a cool refuge on the forest-covered banks of a stream.

'A hammock journey of three hours to the town of Commend late in August afforded me very good sport. The time wa propitious, the rainy season being over, the ripened corn wa ready for the dusky husbandmen, yams and bananas looke gorgeous in the plantations, the ground-nuts were ready to b dug up—and of this state of affairs deer, piggy, and monkey were well aware. A short walk from the picturesque old ruine fort (one of the vestiges of the earliest English settlement) too us clear of the town, and striking a winding path, we entered Indian file, into the dense forest undergrowth. A sharp turn t the left over rising ground revealed to us a succession of extensiv



WAITING FOR THE FISHING BOATS

fields heavily cropped with maize. The corn was in every stag of growth, fresh and green, the cob sheaths adorned with tassel of palest green, golden yellow, or blood-red filaments; in many cases the withered stalks had been stripped of cobs and leaves in others they were laden with the ripened corn, the whole plan having taken on a dusty yellow hue, and the cob tassels deepene into dark brown. Dividing the fields were thorny hedges, and in some patches negresses and their progeny, well-nigh nude burrowed for the oily ground-nut; framing all was the majestic forest, knitted together by tangled creepers, aglow with silvery clematis and vivid-hued convolvuli. The sinking sun lent a pleasing glow to the whole scene, and as a cool seabreeze temper

the atmosphere, we are truly tempted to estimate everything at a *couleur de rose* value. Poetise as we will, we are Britons, and as a few paces bring us to the forest again, the hurried rising of two woodpigeons recalls us to our bearings. Two sharp reports in quick succession and the birds drop almost at our feet. But the reports produce two unexpected results; at least a hundred pigeons rise from their evening meal amidst the corn, and circling overhead, promptly drop back again. There is a second and more prolonged commotion, however, for the negresses and their ebony offspring set up wild howls of terror. They had been too intent on their labour to notice us, and accustomed to the

A FOREST PATH

reckless shooting of native hunters, and the too frequent consequences of being mistaken by them for "aboas" or animals (and, forsooth, there is some excuse for this), they think their end has come. They "live for dead," as the Kruboy expresses it. Time and patience are required to calm the flustered black flock. The raving lunatics having settled down once more to peaceful grubbing, we proceed on our tramp, gently apostrophising our native carriers, who can't understand the philosophy of beating the bush. "Why cannot the white men shoot birds on the ground, instead of waiting till they take wing and snatch a chance of escape?" And I may here say that anyone coming out here with the intention of enjoying sport should bring with him a

couple of well-trained spaniels. As we approach a bushy clump we hear a gentle "cluck, cluck," and with a sudden loud whizz up dart a cover of half a dozen partridges, but so quickly, that although there are two reports only one bird remains to grace our bag. Later we beat them up again, and having one or two successful shots at the pigeon as they circle overhead preparatory to a sudden drop into their leafy roosting places, we decide to follow their example. We trudge home and are glad of the odour of grilling meat. "Boy! cocktail, and pass chop."'

One thing is quite certain, sportsmen must depend upon themselves. Little or no help can be expected from the natives. Every man has a gun, mostly antiquated Danish flintlocks with a yard or two of tubing by way of barrel—the treaty of Brussels prohibiting the sale of arms of precision to natives of the West Coast—and every man kills what he can. But he does not care for sport; killing game is a matter of business, and if when he is out in the fields he sees something moving he shoots it. One man who was chosen by a local chief as a 'crack shot' acknowledged he had shot a good deal. He knew that all kinds of animals live in the bush, leopards, deer, monkeys, bush pig, and many others; but though he appreciated them all as equally worthy of powder and shot, he could not tell whether they had special haunts. 'I have found them in the young grass, in the cassava field, in the banana field, in the forest.' He added, 'I cannot say when is the best time to shoot them, perhaps in the morning, perhaps in the afternoon, perhaps in the evening.' Of course much of this avowed ignorance may be merely deep cunning. Why should the poor black man give away such valuable secrets to his white master? At all events, they are clever trappers, and manage to kill a prodigious number of monkeys. In 1894 upwards of 90,000 monkey skins were exported from the Gold Coast, which would represent a slaughter of quite 100,000 beasts. My friend writes: 'Whether we have gorillas, chimpanzees, or other of the larger species here, I am unable to say from personal experience; but that there is abundant sport with various kinds ranging from the small white beard to the large dog face is indisputable, as I have found, and that but eight miles from the coast.' One such monkey shooting expedition was made from an up-country village: the start took place at 5 o'clock in the morning, in company with a local Nimrod, whose costume consisted of a small loin cloth and a shot bag. 'It was a damp, drizzly, cheerless morning, but this did not appear to affect the guide in the least. He tramped along the rugged path, brushing

against the moisture-laden bushes, quite unconcerned for himself, but bowing apologetically, as much as to say, "You white man, you fit follow me?" I find the popular idea of the white man here is one who is afraid to be caught in the rain, who is generally found in a hammock. It will be remembered that a former King of Ashantee once held the same idea, declaring to his people that they had nothing to fear from an invasion of white men, who only travelled with umbrellas, and who would be killed by the rainy season. However, even a Scot can throw aside his gamp when necessary, as the king found out to his cost. But let us travel back to our monkeys. The guide, satisfied that drizzle had no

A RIVER FISHING VILLAGE

terrors for me, made signs that noiseless advance was imperative. To the elaborately equipped European few things are more tiring than the ceaseless vigilance and strain requisite for a silent tramp through forests. It requires an unshod foot and bare skin to slip over branches and past bushes like a slippery snake or lithe panther. But chattering monkeys dislike intrusion, and as we had left the outskirt woods for the primeval forest precautions were necessary. Here we found cotton trees towering 150 and 200 feet overhead, quite dwarfing the palms, and throwing out huge limbs which interlaced with others. Beneath this canopy of foliage lianas hung in garlands from tree trunks, sweeping over feathery bamboos, fern trees, and flowering bushes. As we

peered into the thick vegetation, we were startled by a loud, sharp sound, something between the grunt of a sow with her litter and the bark of a dog, which caused us to turn about and gaze upwards through the sheltering undergrowth. On the topmost branches of an immense cotton-tree I espied a full-grown dog-faced monkey with his harem about him. A charge of buckshot soon caused the old fellow to realise that he was in danger, and with a few loud grunts, evidently intended to warn his associates, he vanished. At the same instant we became spectators of one of the most marvellous acrobatic feats I have ever beheld. From a tree some thirty yards off there sprang, apparently from space, a monster monkey, fully two feet high. With unerring aim he made for the tree in which his kind found shelter; alighting on one of the outmost branches, with a swift curve of the tail he threw himself on to it, and clambering up was out of sight in a second. It was nothing less than marvellous that, at a distance of barely fifty yards, a troop of such big beasts should be able to secrete themselves in the trees. But so dense was the growth that they were quite invisible. We waited fully ten minutes, when there was a gentle rustle among the branches. Chancing my luck, I fired, and was rewarded by another wondrous acrobatic display. Hurling himself from a terrific height the male made a gallant attempt to escape, but, unfortunately for him, he seized a rotten branch, and came crashing to the ground. Mortally wounded he still showed fight. My guide darted forward with a short cutlass, I followed, but, alas! my career was ignominiously cut short. Catching my foot in a trailing clematis, I was thrown forward on to a bed of moss and green boughs, and at once disappeared in a seven-foot pit, one of those dangerous native game traps. My guide returned to my rescue, but Master Monkey got away. There was no more shooting that day.'

Some five or six miles from the coast, up the Sweet River Valley, leopards are often seen, and occasionally buffaloes invade the cultivated fields, while in the forests are tiger-cats and hyenas. The leopard is locally known as a 'tiger,' and causes much terror among the natives, who dread them so much that the appearance of one of the beasts near a village will be talked of for weeks. An amusing instance of this occurred at Elmina, where a Kruboy suddenly burst upon an after-dinner symposium with the startling announcement: 'Massa, big tiger live for Mission Hill!' That a leopard should take up his abode so close at hand as the eminence capped by the Catholic monastery, naturally caused some excitement. Cigars were quickly thrown

aside, rifles seized, and the whole party made a bee-line for the hill. 'As the hour was late, of course the fathers could not be disturbed, so quietly a plan of attack was decided upon, and as the brute was reported to have marched boldly through the worthy fathers' plantation on the northern slope and down into the salt plains, we felt sure of nabbing him. Someone declared he distinctly heard the leopard growl, which increased excitement to fever heat. All efforts, however, proved fruitless. The following evening the Father Superior was made acquainted with our efforts. He laughed loud and long. "Why, it was three months ago that I saw him, and only last night I mentioned the fact to

CANAL FISHING FLEET

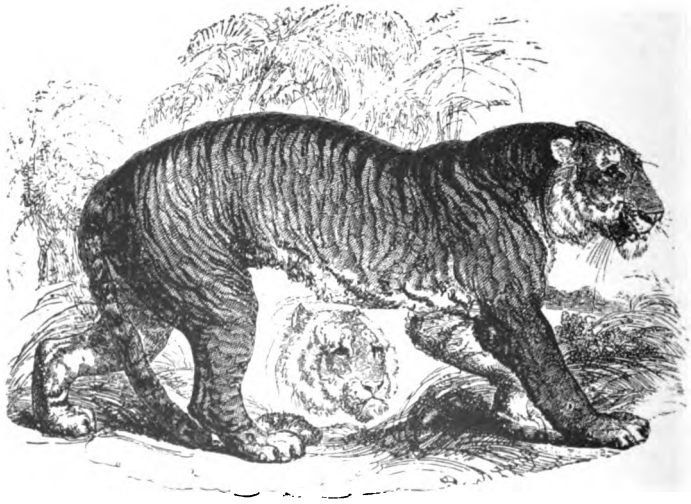
a visitor. No doubt one of the boys heard, and his vivid imagination conjured up a picture of a devouring tiger at our door. But," he added, "if you will only go to our farm up the Sweet River you will find plenty of work. Quite recently leopards have calmly trotted in and appropriated our pigs, wild buffaloes trample our fields, while grey parrots and pigeons levy heavy toll on our crops."'

From all this it will be gathered that fine 'mixed bags' are within the reach of those who do not mind long tramps and hard work amidst grand vegetation and scenery on the Gold Coast.

A few practical hints will not be amiss. It is wise to take out a couple of well-trained sturdy dogs to shoot over. A portable

camp bed and rug are advisable. As in this colony there is an import duty of 5*s.* per hundred on loaded cartridges, and one of only 2*s.* 6*d.* on empties, it is well to bring out the best brass cases, those which will stand repeated reloading, as by this means a good supply is secured at a trifling cost. 'The climate plays havoc with powder; Schultz E.C. and Amberite will in three or four months become very uncertain, and consequently entail a lot of cuss words. I experienced the same cause and effect in Central America. Curtis and Harvey's black powder seems admirably adapted to the climatic vagaries here and will keep practically indefinitely. Rangoon oil has as little effect in preventing rust as any other kind. I preserve my guns in splendid condition with pure vaseline, and find baize-covered rods for the barrels indispensable.'

Such is the cheerful tale of a busy man, who wisely varies the monotony of official duties with adventures by flood and field. But as a clue to his enthusiasm it may be well to say that he takes as careful note of the wonders of botany and entomology as he does of big bags or heavy creels.



CARTING THE GROUSE

BY WILLIAM THOMPSON HALL

Of the various means which have been devised to circumvent the grouse, the somewhat old-fashioned method of carting is worthy of consideration. Indeed, to many of the older school of sportsmen it is looked upon as the most fascinating form of grouse-shooting. After September birds are so wild that it is well-nigh impossible to get within shot of them, and on a small moor of a thousand acres or so driving is impracticable, as, however well stocked it may be, the disturbance soon drives all the game off the ground. It is in such cases that the cart forms a welcome and valuable aid to the sportsman. It must not, however, be supposed that carting is only suitable on small moors. By taking different portions of a large moor, on different days, a continuance of excellent sport is provided.

Up to date grouse-shooting is a very different affair from what it was in the time of our grandfathers. The City man now rushes down to Yorkshire, Northumberland, or Scotland with a friend or two on Wednesday night, slays a thousand grouse, and hurries back to town on Saturday, his mind filled with confused ideas of a chaotic medley of men, boys, flags, butts, cartridges, grouse, guns, dogs, and luncheon hampers. Carting is not for such as he.

In making preparations for carting the first consideration is to get a good man as driver. This personage must have a good temper, and be naturally endowed with patience, as these qualities are often severely tested in the course of a long day on the moors. He must be strictly obedient, attending without question to every word, look, and signal from his master, and he should be withal a

pleasant fellow. The horse must be steady, strong, quiet, and in good condition, as it is heavy work dragging a cart all day over a rough moor, among long heather, across deep sheep drains, up steep hill-sides, and through soft, boggy morasses. Horses that are accustomed to the fells, such as are kept by shepherds for carting their peats and hay, are the best, as they have learned from infancy to step over drains and avoid bogs that will not bear their weight. The horse must also be one that will 'stand the gun,' and not be at all startled when a shot is fired, even though it be at his very nose. An ordinary short, lightish farm cart does very well, and if its wheels make a rattling, rumbling noise so much the better. It is always found that grouse sit better to a noisy cart than to a more silent one. As to dogs, it is only necessary to have one to find wounded birds. A steady, well-trained retriever is very good; a setter or pointer also will do all that is required. The dog is sometimes allowed to lie in the cart, beside the driver, but he is usually made to follow at heel behind the vehicle. Lunch must be substantial and according to the taste of the consumer. Light Prestonpans beer is an excellent beverage. If wine is required, it should be claret, and the spirit must be old Scotch whisky. A sackful of good hay, a small bag of oats, and a pail to give him water must be provided for the horse. A few dry brackens in the bottom of the cart, and the equipment is complete.

The time for carting begins about the middle of October, and continues until the end of the season. November is the best month, provided that meteorological conditions are satisfactory. Birds sit best in settled and rather frosty weather, with the barometer high and rising. They sit very well also and are easily seen when there is snow on the ground. However clear and bright the weather may be, if the barometer is falling and a change imminent they cannot be approached. They are then in a wild, excited state, and instead of fluttering away for a hundred yards or so, and alighting with their well-known 'beck, beck, beck,' they will fly off for half a mile or more.

The reader will understand me best if he will accompany me in imagination through a day's carting. It is the second week in November. The mercury has been rising steadily for several days, and the weather wears a settled aspect. The nights are cold, keen, and frosty; a white, hazy mist settles in the valleys, but the sky overhead is clear and cloudless. In the mornings the ground is white with hoar frost; there is ice on the pools, and we know that winter is at hand. Appearances being in every way

propitious, we decide to have a day's carting. In the evening we call upon our driver, John, to have a little chat, and to make arrangements for the morrow. John is an ideal driver, a man who knows his business and does it cheerfully. He offers no suggestions, never speaks when at his work except when he is spoken to, and then for the most part only in monosyllables. Many a pleasant day we have spent on the moors with John. We decide to take the old brown horse, whose manners on the fells are unimpeachable, and we direct John to have everything ready to start at 7.30 in the morning. His quiet 'Varra weel, sir' implies a great deal more than it expresses, and we are satisfied that everything will be in order. We look out at ten o'clock, scan our favourite constellations, nod to the new moon, and then to bed.

We rise in the morning at six o'clock, and get everything in order, taking a spare gun in the cart, not that we intend to use it, but in case anything may go wrong with our old Greener. At 7.30 to a minute John comes round with the cart. The morning is just such as that already described; if anything the frost is a little harder and the atmosphere not quite so clear. It is, we think, perfect, for our purpose. A dozen partridges are disporting themselves on the lawn, so tame that they merely run amongst some bushes when we shut the door. We would not harm them for the world. There is an old-fashioned, comfortable appearance about our turn-out, and the fragrant aroma of John's 'brown twist' smells like incense in the fresh, bracing air. We get into the cart, seat ourselves on the sack of hay; John mounts the 'cart head,' and we are off. We have about a mile to drive before starting operations, so we light our pipe and draw John's attention to the beauties of the landscape, pointing out to him a long pack of white clouds, away to the east, the summits of which are gradually being flushed with the roseate hues of dawn, and we remark that the scene is somewhat like sunrise among the mountains of Switzerland. 'Varra likely,' says John. 'Aw nivver was theer.' Conversation of a similar kind whiles away the time, until we arrive at the gate where we enter the moor. And now we are in the midst of surroundings which we feel ourselves totally unable to describe. The music of the moors is at its height. Birds, single, in pairs, in threes and fours, are fluttering, flying, rising, alighting, standing still, running away, as if playing at hide and seek among the heather, and all becking, as if their very lives depended on the amount of noise they can make. Though the note of the grouse may not be very melodious, it is totally different when hundreds of birds are becking in all

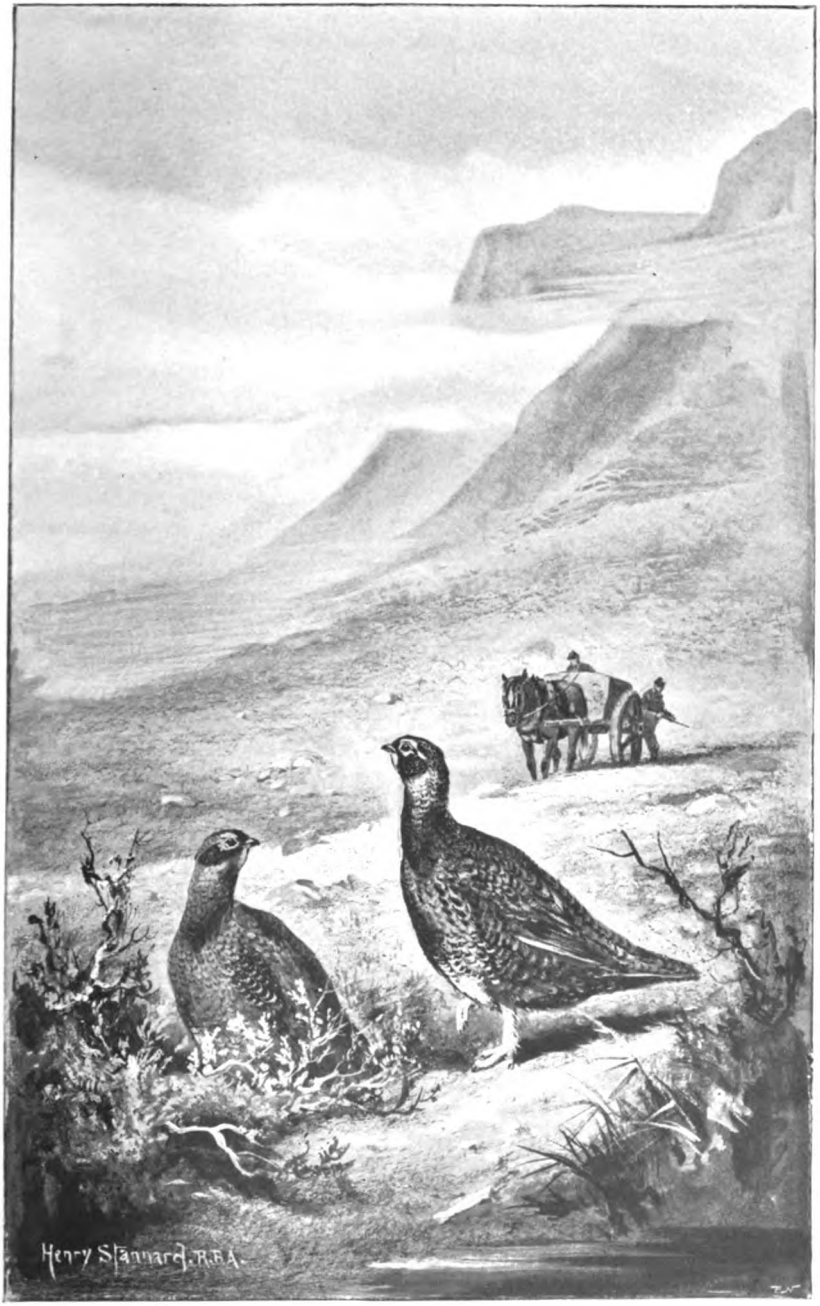
directions, some close to you and others miles away. Such a concert is unique; no other sound or combination of sounds in the world even resembles it.

It is now nearly eight o'clock, and the light is sufficient, so we must get to work. We put off our ulster, sling on our cartridge bag, and load. John lies down beside the hay sack, his eyes only being above the wood of the front part of the cart. Don, our steady old setter, is put into the cart; he knows the business and placidly curls himself up on the brackens.

John now drives on, and we walk close in behind the cart. About eighty yards in front of us a pair of cocks are stalking quietly about on some short heather. We drive round in a circle until we are within forty yards of them; we then step out from the cart towards them; they rise and we have a right and left, but we miss with the second barrel, so only pick up one bird and proceed. A little to our right a grouse comes fluttering down, and alights near a big stone. John drives round as if he were going past him; we get nicely within shot and kill. As, having reloaded, we go to lift the bird, a beautiful speckled hen steps out from behind the stone, but it is too early in the day to shoot such a beauty and we let her go. John now informs us that he 'so twee leet amang some lang heather' to the right of us. We do not see anything, but we have faith in our driver, and, thoroughly on the alert, stick to the cart. Presently a head pops up.

O'er the tops o' the heather ye ken his red kame;

down it goes again, and nothing is visible. We drive on until we feel sure of being within shot, and walk out, wondering if they have somehow eluded us after all, when, whirr—one rises at thirty yards, and falls dead to our first barrel. Only a few more steps and his companion rises at a little greater distance; but we make no mistake this time. I ought to state here that in going towards a bird it is necessary always to drive towards his head, keeping full in his view, and if possible having him looking towards you. If you drive round behind him he is almost certain to rise before you get within shot. We now turn back a little, as we intend to work up rather near the march, so as to keep the birds on our own ground. A solitary grouse is sitting, oblivious, on the top of the boundary wall. 'Drive down to the wall, John, and I shall stalk him.' The order is obeyed, the cart driven as desired; creeping round past the horse's head, and close up by the side of the wall, until we are within forty yards or so, we have a sitting



A PAIR OF COCKS ARE WALKING QUIETLY ABOUT ON SOME SHORT HEATHER

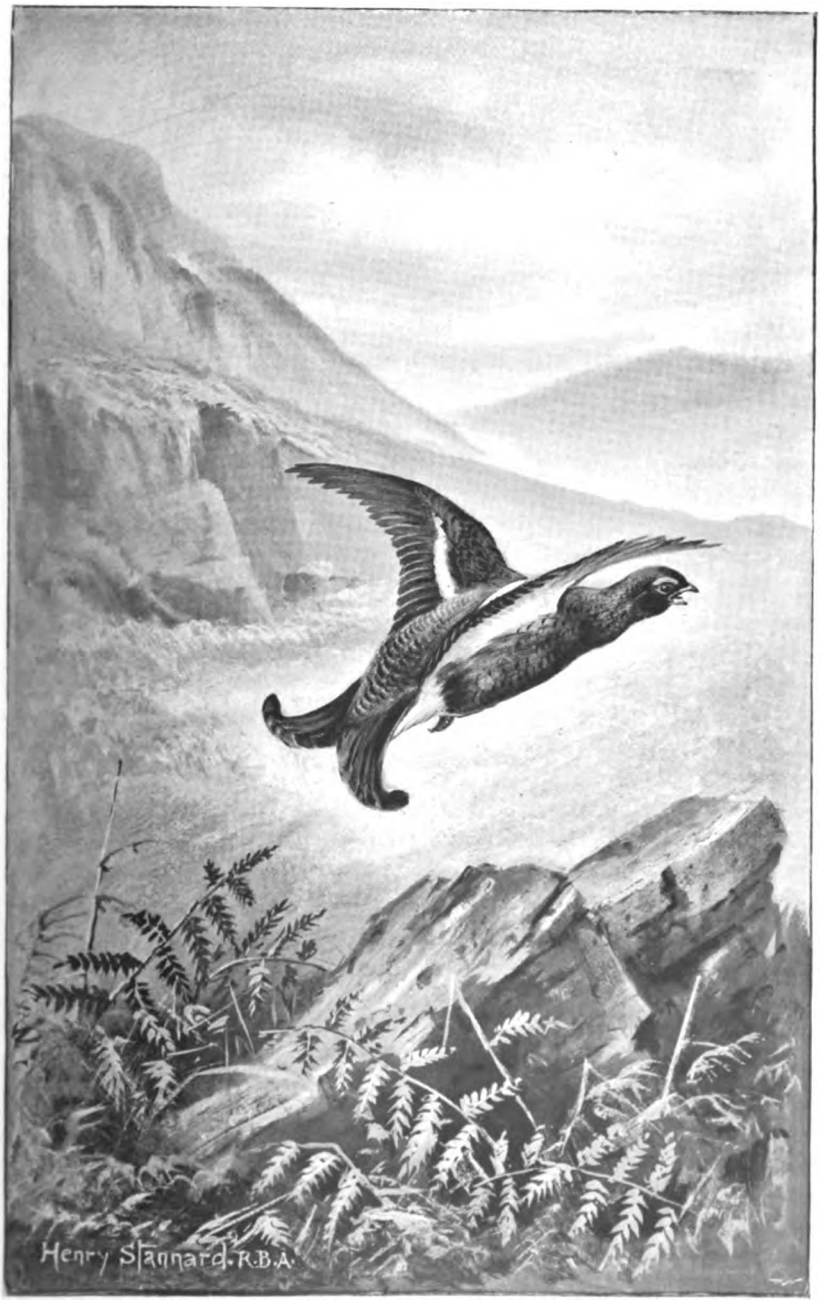
shot, and the bird flies off for twenty yards, and falls, to all appearance, dead. We go to pick him up, when, to our amazement, he flies off as if he had not been touched. A second shot settles him. We always shoot birds sitting, when we can, on the boundary walls, as they would be as likely to fly on to our neighbour's moor as to remain on our own. Our course is straight up the moor, within thirty or forty yards of the wall. There are three grouse sitting behind a knoll, a little to our right; when just opposite them we step out and kill right and left. We are now on the very best part of the moor, and it is the best time of the day, so we must push on. Before we have gone far a single bird, which we had not previously seen, rises: a long shot; but he falls some two hundred yards away, and Don, called from the cart to go and find him, lights on him, broken-legged, beneath some long heather. In the corner to which we are now proceeding there are some old quarries, and a green road leads up to them. On this road a pair of grouse are strutting about. They walk off the road and go behind some rushes; for a moment they are out of our sight. John knows where they are and drives accordingly; the head of one appears, and as we are very near the march we shoot him sitting. His companion rises, a grand shot, and he falls just over the boundary. We noticed a bird alight on the brae just above one of the quarries, so the cart is taken into the quarry and we scramble up the side and search for the bird among the long heather. He rises unexpectedly in a different place from what we had calculated, and, in spite of both barrels, there is not a feather knocked off—we have missed him. Two birds have settled on the wall a little below us. We go towards them; one of them hops off on to the adjoining moor; we kill the sitting one dead, and look over the wall. 'Eh, John, here is a grand shot, within fifteen yards of the wall.' 'Shut eet,' says John very quietly. But instead of taking his advice we give John a short lecture on the rights of property, specially referring to the eighth commandment in the Moral Law.

We now take a zigzag course down a fresh part of the moor. Birds are plentiful, and sitting well, and we are having excellent sport, in every way similar to that described. As time passes we begin to feel a little tired, and also miss some rather easy shots, so it seems wise to go to a stell and rest awhile. I may mention that a stell is a circular piece of ground fifteen or twenty yards in diameter enclosed by a high stone wall, to afford shelter for sheep in very stormy weather. It is now about eleven o'clock, a beautiful clear day. We put on our top coat—you are very apt

to take cold if you neglect to do so—and count our birds. Th
are ten and a half brace, all cocks except three. We did
intend to shoot any hens, but sometimes a dark-coloured one
difficult to distinguish from a cock, especially when flying a
distance and in an uncertain light. Then follows a little refre
ment, a smoke, and rest for half an hour.

An extraordinary change has taken place since we came on
the moor three hours ago. There is now not a bird to be seer
nor heard. The concert is ended and the performers h
disappeared. Vainly we strain our eyes and our ears for a si
or a sound of birds. To all appearance the day's sport is o
and the tiro would probably think he might as well go ho
We know better. We are going to a well half a mile aw
where we intend to have lunch, and our way thither will be o
some excellent ground. After proceeding a couple of hund
yards without seeing or hearing anything we stop and tell Jo
to sit up in the cart. Our order is just obeyed when a gro
rises within five yards of us and goes off like a rocket; our g
is at halfcock, and the bird is fifty yards away before we can f
He falls, winged only, behind a bed of tall bracken, but I
is told to go and find him. In our haste we have neglected
reload the barrel just fired and our gun is still open. As
hurry up an old black cock springs from behind a rock amo
the bracken, which in our excited, awkward, and untoward cor
tion we let too far away, but we have a shot at him; so
feathers fall and we know he is hit. We shout to John to ma
and then hunt up the wounded grouse. On returning to the c
John informs us that he 'lit amang some reshes, just roond
plantin' corner.' The said plantation is a quarter of a mile
and we would fain not go so far out of our way, but we m
have him. Don takes a cast round the rushes, and soon ma
a dead set; we walk up, and the bird, apparently no worse, g
up thirty yards in front of us, to fall dead: it was an easy sho

On returning to the cart we learn that there are some bi
in a stretch of long heather about three hundred yards aw
Driving straight towards them for about one hundred and fi
yards we then make a détour, as if going from them, but
reality circling round, gradually getting nearer the place wh
we expect to find them. They have, however, been moving,
we see them running, cowering, along a sheep track, and th
hiding; but they will not rise yet, so we persevere in
course, keeping well to the right. We do not see them, but
strictly on the watch, for at any moment they may rise. N



AN OLD BLACK COCK SPRINGS FROM BEHIND A ROCK AMONG THE BRACKEN

have we long to wait, for in going past a knoll covered with old long heather they fly up. There are five of them, but one only is within shot, and another unit is added to our bag.

On the way towards the well for lunch, we get a couple of shots by the burn-side, killing only one bird; and now there is an unavoidable wait of an hour or so, as no birds are to be seen, and they will not begin to feed before two o'clock; after that we anticipate excellent sport for the remainder of the day, fervently hoping that no blackcock will appear to annoy us. On a former occasion we had good shooting in the forenoon, and expected to increase our bag largely before night, when, to our dismay, after lunch we found blackcock sitting all over the moor. There was a driving day on a moor two miles off, and large numbers of blackgame had come over to us for refuge, thus vexatiously augmenting our own excessive stock. There is no more wary bird than an old blackcock. He will not sit to the cart, but fly off when you get within about a hundred yards of him, disturbing all the grouse in his neighbourhood, rendering carting well-nigh impossible. A few times, for revenge, we have shot an old greyhen with the cart, a blackcock never. I may mention that blackcock usually cause most annoyance towards evening, when their heads, just showing over the tops of the heather, are easily mistaken for grouse, and you drive away towards them, only to have your temper ruffled and your time wasted.

It is now getting on towards two o'clock, time to prepare to start. There is some short, fine heather just over the summit of the hill, where very likely birds will have begun feeding, and thither we direct our course. We have a twofold object in view: in the first place we expect to have sport; and, secondly, the birds which we disturb will fly inwards to some good feeding grounds, which we are to visit later on. The luck is with us, for birds are plentiful, but wilder and more difficult to approach than we had supposed, and we are forced to take longer shots than in the morning. From the top of the hill there is a splendid view of the surrounding country, but we are more impressed by the large quantity of birds feeding on the lower ground. In moving down the fell our attention is drawn to some heads on the hillside just below us. A query from John—unintelligible to most people—'Abeun or below?' 'Below, John; keep well off them'—and we turn back over the hill-top, until we are out of their sight, then move along, and descend below them, well to the right, turn along an old disused road, circle round

until we are within shot, and step out from the cart. There are ten of them, and we have the satisfaction of killing a brace with the first barrel, and a single one with the second, without wounding any of the others, for the leash we have shot were out of the line of the rest. When grouse are on a hill face it is always necessary to drive round underneath them, for, although one cannot account for it, they will rarely sit when approached from the higher ground. It is now three o'clock, and we must make the most of our time, for the light will fail us in an hour and a half. We hurry down the hill, and are soon in the thick of the fray. If there be such a thing as a grouse-shooter's paradise we are now in it. Birds are feeding quietly all around us, and our difficulty lies chiefly in deciding which to take. We are continually on the move, for as soon as we kill one bird another is waiting for us. The sun is sinking, and the light imperfect, so we get some difficult shots. But we are very hot; so is our horse; it is four o'clock, we have been missing rather too often, and we stop for a drop of the 'real old Highland glory.' Our bag is nineteen and a half brace of grouse and a blackcock, to which we hope to add another brace or two, so move on. We see some birds a considerable distance away and go towards them, when, to our disgust, a great flock of sixty or seventy blackgame rises well out of shot. It is no use wasting our little remaining time here, so we hasten homewards, intending to try a ridge on our way, where there are sure to be birds. It is now a race between our horse and the sun. With his head homewards, and a little encouragement from John, the old nag steps out bravely, and we arrive in time to have a few speculative shots, adding three fine cocks to our bag, which now amounts to twenty-one brace of grouse and one blackcock.

Et jam nox humida cælo
Præcipitat.

We mount the cart, and make our way home, satisfied with our day's sport, deciding to cart another part of the moor on the morrow. I have endeavoured to give a fair account of an average day's sport on a good moor. Much larger bags are frequently made, and I have little doubt that, under the most favourable conditions, it would be possible for one gun to kill fifty brace. There must never be more than one gun with a cart, for if there are two shooters they are certain to get into each other's way, and thus spoil the sport of both.

To keep a moor in good order for carting the most important question to be considered is that of heather-burning. This

matter is discussed entirely to my way of thinking on p. 226 of the 'Grouse' ('Fur, Feather and Fin' Series). It is very well to burn strips in long stretches of heather, and this is probably the best method on large moors that are to be driven. For carting, however, and also for the comfort and convenience of the birds in the breeding season, I think it is much better to burn in polygonal patches. By this means you have heather of various growths, alternating, all over the moor, an arrangement in every way suitable both for grouse and sheep. Indeed, it may be taken as an axiom that what is good for the sheep is good for the grouse. Very old heather is absolutely useless, but I should not be an advocate of the principle of burning off all the longish heather. After burning a strip through a tract of pretty long heather last season I was surprised to see the burnt ground literally covered with droppings, which proves that it had been resorted to by grouse in large numbers for some purpose. A well-mixed moor—that is, where there is an admixture of white land and heather—is the best for carting, as it is also for shooting over dogs. I have seen birds sit very well in damp, 'flowy' places, especially in very dry weather, such as was experienced in October last (1897).

It is somewhat curious that besides the grouse there is only one other bird that will sit to the cart, viz. the golden plover. But they will only sit singly or in pairs. Occasionally a flock of them will fly past the cart within shot, and, as they keep pretty close together, you may kill six or eight with your two barrels.

By using the cart the proportion of males to females can be more satisfactorily regulated than by any other means, as in nine shots out of ten it is easy to distinguish a cock from a hen; and it might be worth while for proprietors of the very best driving moor to consider if it would not be advantageous to have a few carting days at the end of the season to kill off some of the super-abundant cocks.

There is a character about carting grouse that is not common, so far as I know, to any other kind of sport. Unlike driving, there is no hurry or bustle; you mark a bird and drive to it, all the time being on the alert, for you never know when a grouse which you have not seen at all will spring out close to you. No kind of sport provides better exercise, or is more conducive to health. It is much less expensive than driving, and I have often thought that sportsmen who rent moors of a moderate size, and who have often considerable difficulty in getting up a 'driving day,' would do well to give a fair and unbiassed trial to the cart.

CRUISING IN FRIESLAND

BY CHRISTOPHER DAVIES

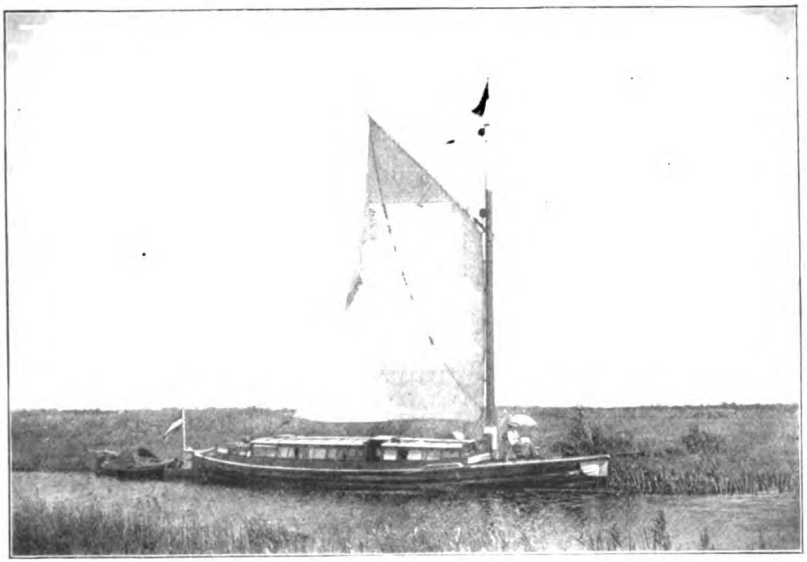
OVER the North Sea, on a rare summer night of absolute calm, we started for the fifth time for a cruise on Dutch waters. Although we enjoy to the fullest the beauties of hill and vale, of precipice and mountain lake, the pure, snow-clad summits and glistening glaciers, and, above all, the purity and exhilaration of mountain air, and although for many a long year the salt sea and the lifting wave have given us the most prolonged enjoyment, yet the quaint and varied charms of mere and canal in the Netherlands claim us now and again, and give us pleasure which does not stale.

The writer had, perhaps, done Friesland less than any other portion of the network of rivers and lakes which make the Lowlands such a fascinating ground for the lover of cruising: after a mental struggle between the choice of the Alps or the water, the latter conquered, and to Friesland we went.

It is, however, fair to say that the turning argument was the fact that a real Norfolk Wherry actually lay at Leeuwarden, the capital of Friesland, and was to let. She had been towed over from Norfolk some years before by Mr. Doughty, whose expeditions are told in a charming book called 'Friesland Meres.' Those who have enjoyed voyaging on the Norfolk Broads will appreciate

both the idea of a larger Broadland and the comfort of a well-fitted pleasure wherry, which is a roomy house-boat with the sailing qualities of a yacht.

Leaving Harwich at 10 P.M., we reach Leeuwarden, *viâ* the Hook of Holland, Amsterdam, Enkhuisen and Stavoren, at 1.30 P.M. next day, and in a quiet canal—the Zuidfleet—we find the 'Gipsy' lying by a grassy bank; and her capacious lockers soon swallow up our much luggage. It is pleasant enough, in this narrow canal, to watch the constant succession of craft which are poled by, from the great Tjalk, laden with peat, to the smart Boijer or yacht, craft differing little in design, all flat, or rather spoon-bottomed,



THE WHERRY 'GIPSY' ON A FRIESLAND CANAL

bluff bowed and sterned, with great leeboards looking like beetles' wings as they are hauled up on each side. We English yachtsmen are not sufficiently respectful to the leeboard, but it is an ingenious and easily worked contrivance which possesses a much more effective shape and fitting in Holland than is the case on the Thames and Medway barges.

All the vessels are resplendent with ever-bright paint and varnish, and the ironwork is polished until it shines like silver. Knowing how the English hand detests the daily polish of brasswork on a yacht, what would he say if he had to polish all the ironwork which in England is usually galvanised?

Quaint and bright and clean, Leeuwarden occupies us in sightseeing and shopping all the afternoon and the next morning. The shops full of cunning gold and silver ware for which the town is famous, its curios of 'antique' pottery and silver, which are going up in value, as English tourists set the price; its costumes worn by the middle and lower classes, the never-failing gold or silver helmet which is the headdress of the women, in conjunction with lace, or latterly with the hideous bonnet of cheap English fashion; its streets which are canals, and which take the bulk of the traffic; all attract the attention of the visitor, and cause every stroll to be of continual interest.

Our crew consisted of two Frisians: the skipper, Caspar, spoke no English, but the second hand was an elderly man named Pieter, who spoke English well. Both were most willing and anxious to please. Would that we could get such men on the Norfolk Broads!

In the hot noontime we started, the wind blowing warmly from the South, a dead head wind for our general direction, which, to see the great meres, must be southerly.

'Where will you go to, sir?' asked Pieter.

'Anywhere, anywhere out of the world, where no telegrams or letters can reach us.'

'But please to say where,' persisted he.

'Make a fair wind of it as well as you can. Let us go to Bergumeer.' This is a large lake lying westward of Leeuwarden fifteen miles, and soon we were gliding gently along a wide canal through the plain of Friesland, which, save for its meres and their surrounding reeds, is a vast meadowland, and when the hay is cut is quite a parkland of brightest, freshest green. The black and white cows gazed solemnly at us; flocks of lapwing and plover and scores of oyster-catchers, curlews and terns ever accompanied us; here and there storks gravely perambulated the grass or sat in motionless groups on their nests, built on the platforms placed for that purpose over the tops of chimneys or on tall poles in the middle of a field; while herons were as common as in Norfolk, and hawks hovered at frequent intervals. From each vessel we met or passed came a civil greeting and salute, and once, meeting two smart boijers with large pleasure parties on board, they broke into a hearty 'God save the Queen,' ran up the English Ensign to the mast-head, and fired off at us all the good wishes and compliments in English which they could muster between them, finishing off with three cheers in hearty style; all which bewildering compliments we suitably acknowledged.

At Bergum, a small village with a windmill, bridge and schuyts grouped picturesquely, we were obliged to stop, though still in the canal, in order to have a faulty winch stanchion replaced, and some of our party sailed on in a little leeboard boat we had hired at Leeuwarden and brought with us, in addition to the punt or dinghy belonging to the wherry, over the mere. As the wind fell they had to pole her back, arriving at the wherry ravenous for tea.

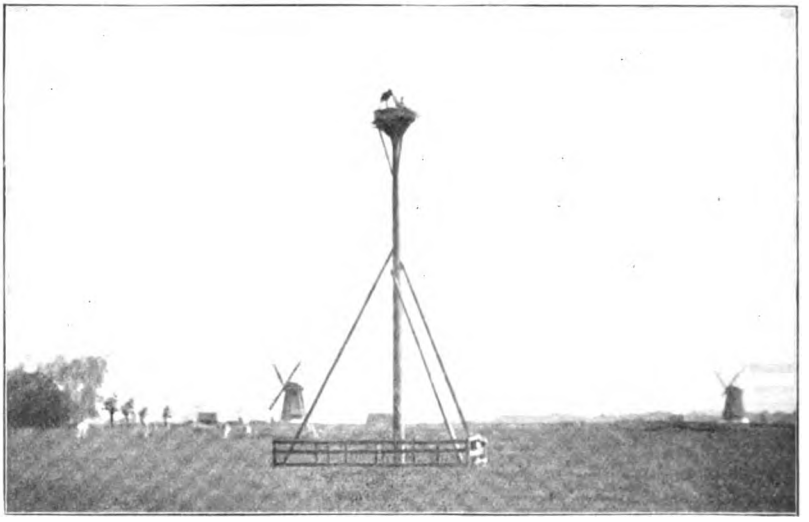
The carpenter, who said he worked as long as he could see at night, and began as soon as he could see in the morning, made a fair job of the stanchion, and after breakfast next morning we were able to sail out of the canal and into the wide expanse of Bergumeer, which we took to be about twice the size of Hickling Broad in Norfolk. After a turn up this, we sailed along the buoyed channel into another narrow canal, and then into another mere called Leijen. On this the water was clear, but in the sun, of a deep claret colour, through which the ripples made bright traceries on the white sand. Pieter had his sounding pole, with gaily painted foot spaces, at work, calling out four-and-a-half feet, four feet, five feet, but rarely the latter. It was a perfect day, and, as Pieter said, 'It was very "single" it was as hot as this in Friesland.' The wind was south and ahead, and when we entered another canal there was some hard quanting to be done to get the barge along.

The vast and treeless flats were dotted here and there with little white tents, in which the haymakers camp out during haysel, their homes being so scattered. The haycocks are piled upon wooden rafts or sleds, to which they harness the horses, and away slides the haycock in a mysterious manner to the boat which awaits it in a neighbouring dyke, and here and there upon unseen dykes and boats stacks of hay moved slowly along with no apparent motive power. Where the hay has been gathered, the land looks like one vast bright tennis lawn of a mathematical plane.

The long gaff of a wherry is not a handy thing when sailing through narrow bridges; the short curved gaff of the native sails is much better. At the warning 'Stryk' posted up near a bridge, the tack is triced up, the peak is lowered, and everything is snug in a minute.

After some four miles of canal, we came to a lake called Eester Zandang, where the wind was dead ahead, and, although there was space enough to tack, the water was so shallow that the wherry would not handle, so we quanted until we were tired, and then brought up and fished.

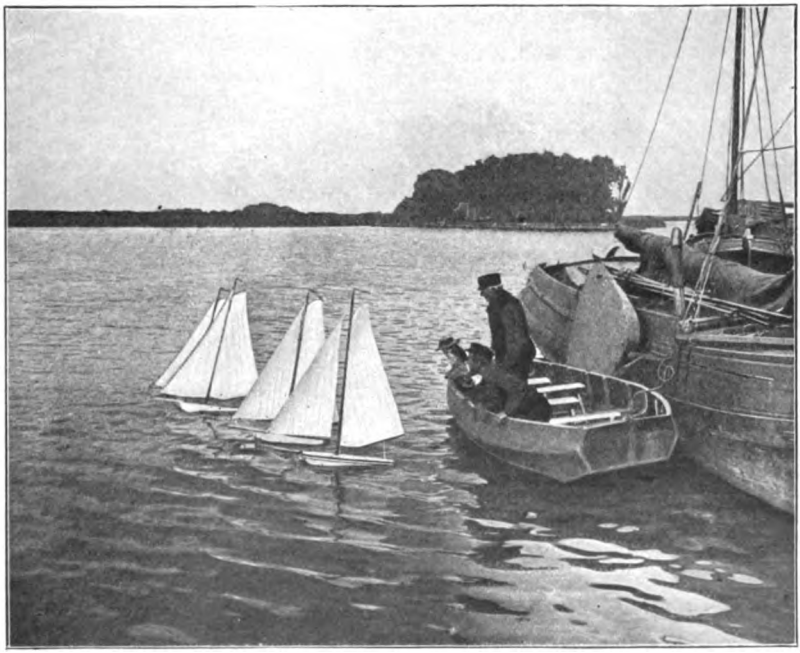
For hours past we had been expecting an easterly wind, the sky in that *airt* being of the clear, pale green tint which is in summer the forerunner of a change of wind from north and east. Sure enough, about seven o'clock there came a little air from the east. Instantly our moorings were cast off, the high peak of our sail hoisted aloft, and we gently glided into another broad and long lake called the Wyde Ee. Although the light air bellied the sail and wafted us slowly along, it was too light to cause a ripple, and the wide expanse of water was still and smooth as a mirror. As the sun declined behind a bank of dappled clouds, the scene was one of such marvellous beauty that it will ever



STORK'S NEST

live in our memories. Of every shade of gold and silver, of every tint of rose and orange and green, the radiance of the western sky was rendered in absolute perfection in the placid mere. The delicacy of the colour was emphasised by the contrasts of the dark hulls and sails of tjalks and schuyts which, in groups of two or three, crept slowly up the track of the sunset. In the absolute stillness the crews of the vessels kept up an easy conversation with each other; the vrouws superintended the retiring toilet of their sun-burned, golden-haired children, with an entire disregard of the publicity of the occasion; the lean and wiry Friesmen leaned idly on the tiller and smoked the eternal pipe. When one schuyt carelessly fouled one of the floating casks

which are used as buoys to mark the channel there was a roar of laughter from point to point of the mere, while the shrill cries of the terns as they balanced in the air and dived into the water after the tit-bits they affect, the splash of fish, the pipe of the redshank, the hoarse cronk of the heron rising from the reeds, and the whistling of wings from a flock of duck high overhead, all were in keeping with the weird charm of the evening. Then, to wind up the evening, after we had laid up for the night, we spent an hour helping some belated haymakers to



SUNDAY AFTERNOON (GROUW)

shove a too fatly laden barge through a narrow drawbridge. We laid by a pumping station and one or two cottages, beyond which there was no sign of human habitation within the circle of the low and unbroken horizon, other than the small white tents of the haymakers, dotted here and there over the vast and level plain, and no sound except a reed wren singing sweetly in a reed-bed, and the faint cry of a passing plover.

As the light faded, the white tents were for a short time luminous with the evening lamp, and there was darkness and silence and rest, profound and absolute.

In the morning we had to beat against a fresh head wind along the sinuous and shallow, though wide, channel of the Kromme Ee, and across two large meres, to the quaint water-surrounded and vessel-frequented town of Grouw, which we consider the most attractive spot in Friesland.

It is, in fact, an island in a labyrinth of mere and stream, with the picturesque appearance of the typical Dutch towns, but with more than usual cleanliness and freedom from evil odours. In fact, in Friesland, apart from the crowded town canals, the water is fresh and sweet smelling, although dark in colour, and as you can always choose a fragrant meadow on which to cast your anchor, or lie out in the middle of a great mere, cruising in this country is an idyllic pleasure.

As we left Grouw, after lunch, the wind increased, so that we had to run up head to the windward bank and take in a reef. Then, as the course of the river brought the wind free, we dashed at a great pace through the railway bridge, and sailed fast with a following wave for some miles, until a sharp turn to right and a narrow sluice brought us to the entrance to Sneeker mere. We were sailing at a great rate, but close hauled, and, as we luffed in the sluice, a large tjalk which was running free had to make way for us, and, having no room, ran hard aground.

As we shot through the opening, not much wider than the wherry, with more way on than was safe, we narrowly escaped colliding with another vessel, and then struck a third a glancing blow, which did her no harm, but shook us from stem to stern, doing, however, no damage. All this happened in a sudden squall, and wherries, with their one large sail, are not very manageable in squalls or narrow waters. When the sail is lowered, the long gaff swings about and fouls the rigging of other vessels, or knocks off somebody's hat in the street, or breaks a bedroom window. Our Fries sailors got into a state of panting excitement over our little difficulty, and did not recover their composure until we were lying as close as we could along the western shore of the Sneeker mere, well away from vessels and houses.

The great mere was turbulent with brown wavelets and coffee-coloured foam, its leeward shores were quite invisible in the distance and the mist from the tossing spray. The tjalks and schuyts came 'bruising' along, their bluff bows smashing into the waves and sending fountains of white water over their foredecks, wetting their sails up to the very gaffs. It was an exciting sail for an hour or two, and then we luffed up

into a narrow canal, and presently were labouring along the crowded canals of Sneek, finding a mooring at last opposite a well-known Dutch yacht, the 'Beaver,' said to be one hundred years old at least, and ornamented by a huge gilt beaver clambering over the rudder head.

Sneek itself will well repay a day or two spent there. Its water gate is beautiful, and the aspect of the town is old world in the extreme. From hence our uneventful way led along great canals, through green pastures and queer villages, and, in particular, through the town of Ijlst, where the canals were

THE WATER GATE, SNEEK

bordered with thick hedges of close-cropped trees between the water and the houses, and where drawbridges were many and intricate, and the frequent twopenny toll was collected in the usual wooden shoes suspended at the end of fishing rods, after the common and rather comical custom. Quietly we glided along, our passengers now busy with the hand cameras, now pretending to read, lounging on the foredeck, made drowsy with the freshness of the sunny air redolent with the scent of the new-mown grass, until at last the horizon grew dimmer and vanished into the sky, and the land faded away into the immensity of the Heeger and Fluessen meres. So long is this joint lake that at

neither end was the shore visible, but, being narrower in breadth, the shores on either side were visible as a narrow line, straight as if ruled with a pencil, between mere and sky. This is practically one lake, the north-eastern portion being known as Heeger mere and the south-western as Fluessen mere, with a continuation through the Garden and Moera meres to Stavoren. We spent some pleasant hours cruising up and down this noble sheet of water, which was nicely rippled by a light breeze, and then, making for a distant beacon, we sailed right at the shore, which disclosed another canal, along which and through the town of Woudsend we passed, until at length, in the golden eventide, we entered Sloten mere and the great lake, which in the gloaming seemed shoreless; and so, wafted by the gentlest of zephyrs, aided by an occasional shove with the quant on the hard sandy bottom, we at last reached our haven in the canal at the southern end which leads to the town of Balk.

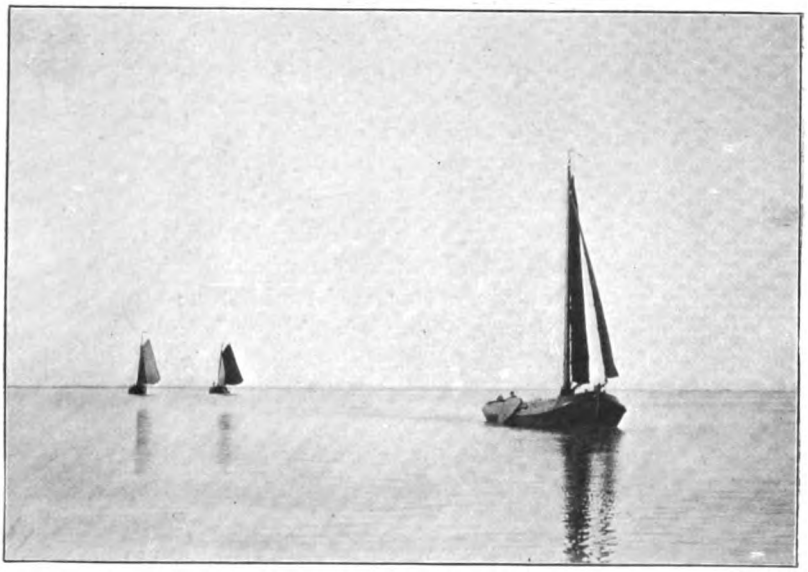
A single narrow street, with a tree-bordered canal and a curious old Town Hall—that is all at Balk; but, follow the canal to the southward, along the narrow sandy path, and you will come to the great feature of the district, the forest of Balk, covering an area, roughly speaking by the map, of five miles by two. It is chiefly an oak forest, cut down in sections to furnish billets for burning, so that there are few great trees; nevertheless, it has the sense of isolation and retreat that belongs to a great forest, and we enjoyed the summer morning we spent there amazingly. We saw no sign of game there, but what lovely pheasant ground it would be, covered with acorns and intersected by boggy dykes and hollows. We were told that in the winter snipe were plentiful, and were caught in nets, and that is all the information we could gather as to its sport. Along the main canal, now dwindled to a dyke, were numerous lines with live bait set for pike, and attached to forked branches on the overhanging bushes. The sandy path was gay with blue butterflies and white and yellow flowers, but of bird life we saw nothing.

Beyond the fact that the owner of this forest domain was a Lord Bountiful in the district, we could learn nothing from our boatmen, and, our stock of Fries being limited to the names of eatables and drinkables, we could gather no particulars as to this most interesting district, as we should have liked to have done.

We enjoyed ourselves much dashing through the waves of Sloten mere on our little leeboard jollyboat, to which the lake was an ocean. The bluff bows of the little craft sent the spray over the masthead, and we were obliged to don waterproofs.

There is a knack in sailing these leeboard craft. To get them to windward you must sail them bang full, when they will edge up to windward sideways, and fetch higher than they point, owing to the plough-like angles at which the leeboards are set. We used to explore miles on miles of the smaller lakes and waterways in this little craft, sailing away into the unknown labyrinths, and trusting to luck to find some other way back.

On Sunday afternoon we sailed in the little boat to the funny little town of Sloten, where the boys mobbed us so much as to be rather alarming, especially as they began to throw stones.



SLOTEN MERE

Dutch boys are a nuisance—the one drawback to journeying in these out-of-the-way spots.

The next morning we sailed the wherry off the mere, past Sloten, along a canal, over Brande mere, along another canal, past Follega, and drifted out on to the vast Tjeuke mere, which, being nearly round, looks larger than any others, with more distant shores. On this day we lay becalmed in the middle, under a cloudless sky of a dark thundery blue, on a glass-like lake of similar hue, with only a faint line in a complete circle in the hazy distance to suggest the presence of any shore, with, for a time, no other vessel in sight; and, as we sweltered in the windless heat, under the shade of a great Japanese umbrella, we really felt

as if we had lost ourselves. Then, when a faint air sprang up and still we did not move, we found that we were aground on a bottom of hard sand. A great portion of the lake is too shallow for any but the smallest craft to navigate, but the channels are deep and well buoyed. The shallowness and the hardness of the bottom, also the freedom from weeds, make these lakes ideal swimming and bathing grounds, and we used to spend hours in the water; but when winter storms do rage, woe betide the craft, however large, which gets aground and is exposed to the thrashing of the short and turbulent sea which quickly arises in the shallow water.

The peak of an English-cut sail in the distance induced the two juveniles of our party to make for it in the dinghy, which it took them two hours to do. They found it to be one of the boats which Loynes, of Wroxham, England, and Stavoren, Friesland, lets out, with a party of four young Englishmen aboard. Our friends spoke to the man in charge, whom they knew, but the 'gentlemen' took no notice of them, and did not even offer them a drink, and when, two hours later still, they returned, hot and weary, they were very angry indeed. The next day we passed this yacht, with the four young men seated in a row on the cabin top; but, although we passed within a few yards, and we had a lady on board, no cap went off in salutation. This is so strange in a land where every passing craft exchanges a friendly greeting, and lifts a cap to the English lady.

We laid up that night at the entrance to the canal leading to Lemmer, a large harbour on the Zuyder Zee, and after a day or two's drifting over calm waters, and an increasing heat, we found ourselves back over Sloten mere, and laid up at Woudsend, while the heat culminated in a terrific thunderstorm. Thence, by a succession of meres and canals, to Workum and Hindeloopen, on the Zuyder Zee, and again northward by a long and narrow canal to Bolsward, back by more canals, lakes and rivers to Ijlst and Sneek, and then to our favourite Grouw for a Sunday's rest. Each day's sail was crowded with interest, and each mile seemed to bring something new to see.

On the Sunday night one of the large farmhouses which contain within their four walls the whole of the farm stock and produce, as well as the household and cows, took fire through the heating of the hay stored therein, and was burnt to the ground. It belonged to a newly married couple, and we were kept awake by the crowd of sympathisers on the quay, who were watching the flames and smoke.

During our wanderings we occasionally fished off the wherry, and caught small and useless roach, just as people do on the Broads. In a country where such a large proportion of the population get their living by fishing there does not seem much sport possible for the angler. Fishing stations, festooned with nets, were by every dyke. Set lines and liggers and floats dotted every quiet backwater, and thousands were set on the great lakes. Very few fish of any size seemed to be caught. We occasionally purchased some good perch, and were shown many tiny pike, kept alive in trunks. Eels, of course, were everywhere, and it

THE LEMMER CANAL

was interesting to see the smart fast-sailing schuyts laden with eels sailing to the ports, such as Workum, where the eels were transferred to a fleet of larger vessels trading to England.

In August some sport with the gun could be had, sailing in a small boat round the reedy margins of the great lakes, but to shoot on the land, or on the smaller lakes, permission must be obtained from the occupiers. A licence to shoot is necessary, and the holder must have his photograph taken, so that some delay occurs in taking it out; otherwise there is no difficulty. We could not hear of any really good sport being obtainable in the winter-time. There seems a lack of cover for fowl, and the

distances are great, so it is doubtful whether a winter cruise in search of fowl would be productive, to say nothing of the more prolonged frosts, when there can be but little open water.

We found it very advisable, when mooring for the night, to choose a spot by a grassy bank, away from reeds or trees, on account of the mosquitoes and gnats. Even the propinquity of a windmill or building is inconvenient; the pests appear to harbour in the woodwork.

Every night a great massacre took place in the cabins. Closing every aperture, we went round with slippers and killed all the gnats and flies which could be found; then, when we were ready to turn in, the lights were put out and windows opened for ventilation, and there was some chance of a quiet night undisturbed by that horrid *buzz* which betokens the enemy on the warpath. Mosquito curtains are a very necessary appendage to one's berth.

Bar the boys, all the persons we met were very civil, and anxious to air their English by assisting us; but the boys!! At Bolsward we had such a crowd following us that one of us, losing his patience, went round with his cap, saying, 'A penny each, please.' This had a momentary effect in dispersing the crowd, but it soon reassembled, while the phrase was picked up and resounded on all sides, and finally we had to retreat into the fine old church, and dodge out by another door.

Now came our last sail, along a narrow canal for the whole day, back to Leeuwarden, which town we found lively with a great fair and exhibition, horse-trotting matches, and all sorts of gaiety and sport, and then in a day or two back to England.

RECOLLECTIONS OF STOCKBRIDGE

BY ALFRED E. T. WATSON

It chances that Stockbridge was the first race meeting I ever attended. In the sixties, when I was in my early teens, I happened to be at Winchester, hired a puffing grey pony, and rode over to make acquaintance with the racecourse. The sport had always had a sort of vague fascination for me. I had read about it, and gazed with the most intense interest on the real thing when I came to see it for the first time. I have a distinct remembrance of Lord Portsmouth, with a white hat on the back of his head. The Duke of Beaufort and other leading members of the racing world were pointed out to me, and I looked almost with awe upon the famous personages whose names were familiar to me in the newspapers, little supposing at the time that I should become a member of the Bibury Club and a frequent visitor to the downs.

There was a long lapse before I saw Danebury again, and then a race meeting was not in progress. I think it was early in the year 1880 that a friend of mine (grandson of a bygone sportsman whose name is written in the list of owners of Derby winners) had won 6,800*l.* at baccarat, and proposed to buy Peter, who was at the time for sale for 7,000*l.* He thought he might as well win the remaining 200*l.*, and the day after he proposed to accomplish this feat we were going down together to see Sir John

Astley's horse; but the attempt to make up this nice little round sum was unsuccessful—indeed, it resulted in my friend losing all he had won with the exception of, as nearly as possible, the trifling balance he had wanted to win; and he came to me forlornly in the morning to explain the melancholy position of affairs. There would be no Peter, that was very certain; instead of that good horse, the only animal he could buy was a plater or a two-year-old; he did not care about a cheap plater, and he suggested that if he could not get anything promising for this small amount, I should add a bit to it and we would have the animal between us. The question arose where the two-year-old was to come from. Shortly before this I had made the acquaintance of William Day, who was then training Foxhall and other of Mr. Keene's horses, and I consulted him on the subject. He had three untried two-year-olds for sale, and one morning I drove over with him to Danebury, where they were stabled. We had the three out, examined and cantered them, and I chose a son of King's Messenger and Calphurnia, who, I may remark, was an extremely bad horse, and after running unsuccessfully for a couple of years, during which time he could never get into the first three, was sold by auction at Sandown Park to Mr. Arthur Yates for thirty-three guineas.

Meantime I had read much of the glories of Danebury in the brave days when the Marquis of Hastings and the Duke of Beaufort were the presiding spirits of the place; and, indeed, of a former epoch with which the names of Lord George Bentinck, Lord Palmerston, and other notable personages were associated. It seemed an ideal training ground; but though we paid a brief visit to old John Day, I saw little of the place except the downs and one of the stables. Not very long afterwards, however, I was to make its more intimate acquaintance.

Hunting one day with the Tedworth, Tom Cannon was out with us, and looked in at Cholderton, where William Day had then taken up his residence, on his way home. We had a chat about things in general and racehorses in particular, and he very kindly asked me to go and spend a day or two with him at the house he then occupied—old John Day was dead, and Danebury being rebuilt—an invitation of which I soon took advantage. Subsequently I was a frequent visitor to Danebury itself, and for anyone who was fond of horses it was about the most delightful place imaginable. Tom Cannon was the best of hosts, and wife the most kindly and amiable of hostesses, with a rooted conviction that all her guests constantly required 'keeping up.'

If at intervals of about an hour and a half one refused her suggestions of champagne, brandy and soda, a glass of sherry, a little whisky and water, a few sandwiches, or a biscuit, she was convinced that one must be in failing health, and was only moderately satisfied if one took just a cigar or a cigarette as a little sort of stay to go on with.

The rule of the day was, up in good time in the morning and a ride on the downs, and it was on the occasion of an early visit that I made the acquaintance of old Duke of Parma, who had won the Cesarewitch six or seven years before, and settled down

DANEBURY

into the most accomplished and sensible of hacks. Some years later I rode him the very last time he ever carried a saddle. In company with Tom Cannon and Colonel R. B. Fisher, now commanding the 10th Hussars, I rode over one afternoon to Garlogs, cantered briskly back, and next day the old horse was so lame all round that he had to be shot. On his back, however, I passed innumerable hours on these delightful downs, watching the work on the flat and over fences and hurdles, and listening to shrewd but always interesting observations of the 'Master of Danebury,' as it became the fashion to call him. Perhaps

there would be a trial to enliven the morning, and that was, of course, always a special source of excitement: then in to breakfast, after that a stroll round to see the mares and foals, then through the stables, where I used to marvel at the extraordinary knowledge displayed by Tom Cannon with regard to the health and condition of every horse in the long ranges of boxes and stalls, numerous as they were. Then luncheon; in the shooting season a walk round for a few brace of partridges and some of the hares which are always plentiful on these downs; in the summer, cricket, tennis, or a lounging afternoon doing nothing particular. Tom, junior, and 'Morny' were just beginning to ride at exercise when I first went to Danebury, and did not at all approve of the discipline, the benefits of which they have since experienced. Tom, junior, as a trainer's son, considered, in those days, that he ought to let visiting friends into some of the secrets of the establishment. I remember in the winter of 1882 his confiding to me that he thought Sigmophone was 'sure to win the Derby, unless Geheimniss did.' Geheimniss had won the Oaks a few months before, and I asked my informant if they were going to let her run for the Derby next year; to which he gravely replied that he believed she would do so. He has learnt more about racing since that period. Sigmophone was at this time the hope of the establishment, and looked likely to fulfil Tom Cannon's great ambition—to breed, train, own, and ride the winner of the Derby. He won the Richmond Stakes at Goodwood from ten opponents in the easiest of canters, his jockey glancing about him from right to left as if in search of something as he came up the straight; and on my asking him afterwards what he was looking for, replied that he had heard there were some good animals in the field, and he was gazing round to see if any of them were coming to have a cut at him at the finish. Sigmophone, however, went a bad roarer during the following winter, and so shattered his owner's hopes.

It was at Danebury that I made the acquaintance of the late George Abington Baird. Tom Cannon had bought a number of horses for him at Lord Falmouth's sale, Busybody amongst others. The mare won the Oaks, as history records. She was sent to Ascot, but was so shaken by a canter on the hard ground —as so very many other animals have been annually since then— that she was unable to run, and returned to Danebury with a view to being prepared for the Leger; but, as her trainer said, 'there was always an "if,"' and towards the end of August she broke down badly. Tom Cannon had not authority to strike her

out, and for several days his letters and telegrams to Mr. Abington begging him to scratch her remained unanswered. This is a little episode of Turf history about which contradictory stories have been current, but the fact of my having been there at the time induces me to believe that my account must be the correct one. I know this, that on September 1, 1883, we were out after the partridges; Tom Cannon walked moodily along, seldom firing at coveys which gave him excellent chances, and I wondered what could be wrong. During a pause in the proceedings I asked him what was the matter, and he told me of his anxiety with regard to Busybody. It was known that she had broken down; some of those who were aware of the fact were taking advantage of their knowledge, and he feared it might be suggested that he was one of them. 'Mr. Abington is coming down to luncheon to-day,' he said, 'and if he does not give me a satisfactory explanation of his silence, all his horses will leave my stables in the course of the afternoon.' I had never seen Abington, about whom, of course, I had heard much, and was rather curious to have a look at the millionaire of whom such odd stories were told. He was in the house when we got back from shooting; Tom Cannon marched him off to his sanctum next the dining-room, from which after a time they emerged, and my host's remark, 'You had better send for your things and stay the night?' showed that everything was all right again. That afternoon we strolled out on the downs, and Abington was introduced to his expensive purchases, many of which he then saw for the first time. Instead of the coarse, blustering person I had imagined, I found him then, and always afterwards on the few occasions when we met elsewhere than on a racecourse, exceedingly quiet and even shy. Busybody was, of course, at once struck out, and Cannon had no further trouble with his employer except when, having got horses ready for him to ride at various meetings, their erratic owner frequently failed to appear. Busybody was a really good mare, and had she not broken down, few things are more certain than that The Lambkin would not have won the Leger of 1884.

There was a really good horse in the stables at this time, called Fritz, a son of Beau Brummel and Ma Belle, who, it was hoped, would do what Sigmophone had failed to accomplish; he was, however, a victim of rheumatism and bad temper, and never showed his real form in public. He was the first horse I ever saw go down on his knees and worry the ground for want of some other object on which to vent his insane fury, though later on

the American Eole II. was about as bad, and another American, Sachem, not much better.

It was a few years after this that, riding over the downs one morning with Tom Cannon, I was immensely struck by a beautiful chestnut colt which cantered past us, and asked Tom Cannon what it was. 'Unfortunately,' he replied, 'it is not mine; I have let the Houghton Downs farm to Chandler, and he has permission to train here. That is a horse of General Byrne's called Amphion. He is a beautiful colt, one of the best movers I ever saw, and I shall have to win a race on him some day.' Before this, I do not think Tom Cannon had ever been on one of the horses that Chandler trained, nor did he ride him on the occasion of his first appearance, which was at Croydon, in a race in which L'Abbesse de Jouarre also came out; but subsequently the two often passed the post first together, and I do not recollect a more perfect picture of Turf life than Tom Cannon cantering in for the March Stakes at Newmarket, with his hands on Amphion's withers. An excellent engraving of the good horse, with his favourite jockey on his back, a present from his owner, now hangs over my writing-table, and is here reproduced. At the Stockbridge meeting of 1884 he was one of the good things which did come off, instead of coming undone, as is so often the case when good things are supposed to be very good indeed. 'Balderdash at even weights' we were told on this occasion, Balderdash being then a remarkably useful three-year-old; and apparently the story was true, for the chestnut won at his ease, Fred Webb, I think, being this time in the saddle.

They only laid 7 to 4 on Amphion; and I remember a far greater 'certainty' at Stockbridge which went the way that certainties so often do go—down. This was Jack o' Lantern. I was lunching at Danebury that day, taking a belated meal with the younger Tom Jennings, and naturally asked him what he had brought? He told me he had Mamia going to run for the Hurstbourne, and on my remarking that I feared her chance was very forlorn, he replied that he did not think it was hopeless; according to his calculations, Jack o' Lantern only had three pounds in hand, Tom Cannon was to ride the filly, and on his own course was not unlikely to make up a trifling difference. I was chatting later to them on the course while Mamia was being saddled, and determined to have a modest investment. Going to the ring, I found odds of 8 and 10 to 1 were being laid on Jack o' Lantern, and, noting that I had been talking to the owner and jockey, a little string of inquisitive followers came after me to see what I was

AMPHION

going to do As I took the odds about Mamia a good many of these followed suit with Richard Dunn, with whom I made my bet. There was a hard race, Mamia won cleverly at the finish, and I remember Mr. Dunn telling me that he had to borrow a bundle of notes from a brother bookmaker to pay the string of bets, the loss of which he attributed to my initiative.

I have never understood why the Hurstbourne Stakes was omitted from the list of 'principal races' in 'Ruff's Guide,' for it has been won by some of the best animals in the 'Calendar.' The fields have seldom been numerous, but they have been extremely select, and a considerable proportion of classic winners have taken part in this event, as, indeed, in the other principal two-year-old races at Stockbridge. One particularly interesting contest was that in which sons of those famous rivals, Bend Or and Robert the Devil, met for the first time. Kendal and Mephisto were the two, and the Bend Or horse had the best of it. His son, Galtee More, made his first appearance in the Hurstbourne subsequently, and it seems odd at the present time that 13 to 8 should have been laid on Minstrel, who had to give Galtee More five pounds—notwithstanding that in all probability the son of Kendal and Morganette was a long way from being the horse his too enthusiastic admirers considered him. St. Blaise (a subsequent Derby winner), St. Marguerite, whose name was famous on the Turf, and is so at the stud, and Thebais are three notable animals that could only get third for the Hurstbourne, which has been won by Donovan, Friar's Balsam, Geheimniss, and other famous horses.

It would have been proper if Mornington Cannon had won his first race at the Stockbridge meeting, and I think he did win his second there, on a mare of his father's, called Wilhelmina Waller. Previously, however, he had carried off the City Bowl at Salisbury, on an animal named Flint. At the Goodwood meeting of the same year, the young jockey greatly distinguished himself by securing the Stewards' Cup on Upset and the Chesterfield Stakes on Spot. I well recollect the Duke of Beaufort's admiration for the way in which 'Morny' won this latter race, taking a careful 'steady' at the distance with all the confidence of an old hand. Spot carried 6 stone.

I believe it has been generally agreed that the Stockbridge paddocks are as good as any to be found in the country, and a Turf anecdote relates how Lord George Bentinck, prone to regarding appearances strictly as he was, took off his coat to help to spread the bone dust on this sheltered paradise of mares and

foals. Close at hand, beneath some bright-hued flower beds, are the bones of Bay Middleton and of Crucifix. Will their resting places, I wonder, be now forgotten?

Touchet was the first horse I remember standing at Danebury, and Tom Cannon was so much in love with him that, having sent him to Newmarket to be sold with a reserve of 4,000 guineas, he grew sadly fearful at the last that some one would take him. Touchet died and was succeeded by Whitefriar, who was sold at a profit, Melanion replacing him, and for a long time his owner was so delighted with this horse that he quite abandoned his idea as to the death of Touchet having been a cruel stroke of ill-luck; for Touchet had never done very much, and if he had lived, the profit gained, first by Whitefriar and then by Melanion, would not have been reaped. Since the days when Melancholy and Venia promised to make the name of Melanion famous, it has become apparent that, though many of his sons and daughters do certainly gallop—and Wild Irishman, the winner of the Chesterfield Stakes, is a recent case in point—the majority of them are certainly soft. Their tempers, too, are bad. Melange, I am told, has to be saddled for a race in his stall, the device being to make him suppose he is only to be taken out to exercise. On the whole, however, Melanion having been sold at a huge profit, it is obvious that the death of Touchet was really an excellent piece of good fortune; so little do we realise what is good for us. I suppose, on the whole, it may be said that horses bred at Danebury during Tom Cannon's residence there have had a fair share of success. Postscript, who carried off the Metropolitan in 1886 and was not very far from winning the Cesarewitch, was a good mare; Fullerton, who won the City and Suburban two years later, and Reminder, who followed his footsteps in 1895, were something more than useful horses, and Humewood, son of the little-known Londesborough, certainly comes into the same category. Tib was not a Danebury-bred horse, though she was a useful winner, and in spite of the obvious fact that Bismarck should have won the Stewards' Cup at Goodwood, and would have done so had not his jockey idiotically looked back to grin at his followers, the Danebury mare did get home, though only by the shortest of short heads. Tom, junior, 6 st. 7 lb. up.

A notable feature of sport under National Hunt Rules a few years since was the appearance of animals from Danebury, very often indeed with Mr. Arthur Coventry in his friend's scarlet and white hooped jacket. In hunters' races, steeplechases, and hurdle races, well-schooled animals from Danebury more than

held their own season after season, and one Grand National fell to the stable when George Mawson, who did excellent service for his master, got Playfair home in 1888. If his stable companion Aladdin had been able to stand the requisite preparation, he would very likely have won instead; I know Tom Cannon expected to be first and second, and he rather imagined that Aladdin would be first. This, at any rate, was the idea of Mr. C. W. Waller, who rode the horse, had excellent opportunities of judging the relative merits of the two, and, as I think I have recorded elsewhere, was so satisfied about what would happen that he took 1,000 to 30 about Aladdin and had not a shilling on the other.

In France, too, Danebury-trained horses distinguished themselves, and that was a notable race at Auteuil in which Prince Edward and Redpath took part. Prince Edward was about twenty-one pounds the better of the pair, but he fell with Captain Lee Barber, inflicting a cut on his rider's head which is visible to this day; and the second string was good enough to beat the rest. Another badly cut head, by the way, is associated with Danebury. One of the last races poor Roddy Owen rode was on this course. At the turn into the straight he tried to come up on the inside of Mr. George Lambton, who was far too experienced a rider to pull out, the consequence being that Roddy's bald head came in such severe contact with the post that he was lucky not to have fractured his skull. I went to see him in the dressing-room after the race, and found him covered with blood but extremely cheerful, frankly admitting that 'George was quite right. I had no business to try to get the turn.'

Amongst those who will not regret the departure of the Cannons from Danebury are the hares that dwell in abundance on the downs. It was one of the smartest little packs of harriers in the country which had Tom Cannon for master, Tom, junior, for huntsman, and 'Morny' for whipper-in. 'Morny' during one season rode an animal called Betelgeux. The horse was afterwards put in training, and won a five-furlong race by an easy half-dozen lengths. I chanced to be in the paddock after the race, and an old farmer, who was frequently out with the hounds, stood looking at the winner. The exhibition of speed was certainly remarkable, and I felt there was justice in the agriculturist's remark, 'No wonder my old cob could not keep up with that one when hounds were running!' One funny incident I can never think of without smiling. There was a huge bulldog at Danebury who looked big and fierce enough to tackle

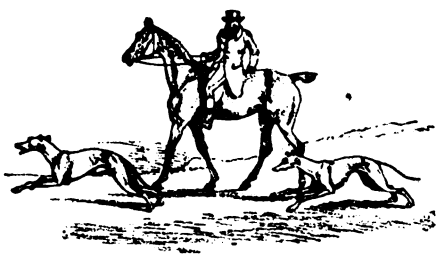
a small lion. One day, on a road near the house, when the dog was passing a very small baby rabbit came out of the fence, sat up and looked at him. The dog gazed at the object for a moment in apparent terror, turned round, and fled at top speed. In spite of his looks he was the mildest of his race.

It is impossible to describe the delights of a Stockbridge meeting without being too personal. Not a few of the pleasantest days of my life have been spent there in company with a host of familiar friends, some of whom have gone for ever, and others disappeared from the racecourse. A few years ago it would have seemed impossible to imagine Stockbridge without the Duke of Beaufort looking on, while 'grim old Alec,' as the late Alec Taylor used to be called, was saddling one of the Manton horses, or putting up a jockey in the light-blue and white hoops; for Stockbridge had no stauncher adherent than the Duke. Lord Suffolk was certain to be there, the characteristic smile, half humorous, half satirical, on his lips, the kindly twinkle of fun in his eye—the quaint view of a subject always presented itself to him and no one could express it more quaintly—criticising the horse of a friend—and that included everyone who 'went racing' and whose friendship was worth having—or noting the points and condition of some horse that his brother-in-law, Arthur Coventry, was to ride. Amongst his closest intimates were Sir William Throckmorton, Sir Frederick Johnstone, and Sir E. Paget, his special friend and neighbour, 'the Blue Duke'—as, taking the name from the colour of the Badminton Hunt coat, Lord Suffolk used to call him—of course included; and if Lord Cadogan had a horse running and fancied it was very likely that Lord Suffolk would put the money on. 'Mr. Manton,' the late Duchess of Montrose, was always to be found at Stockbridge, expressing her opinion of men and horses in the neat phraseology so frequent in her utterances. Poor old 'Mate' Astley, both in the days of his comparative prosperity and later when he would half humorously, half mournfully, bewail his 'stone-broke' condition and ponder deeply before investing his two sovereigns, was a constant visitor. But to mention the chief names that have been connected with the meeting would be to make a list of the leaders of the racing world.

Of riding members of the Bibury Club, Mr. Arthur Coventry has long been prominent, and since his appointment as starter usually abandons the flag here to resume the cutting whip—which he never uses unnecessarily or without good judgment. Mr. Abington failed to secure election to the Club. A proof that money is not all-powerful was strikingly afforded one day when he came

up for ballot, and an occasionally sober hanger-on of Danebury, who does odd jobs for the family, had the insolence to pass the gate, perch himself on the step of the committee-room to ascertain the result of the ballot, and shake his empty head with affected regret at the thrice millionaire, to imply that the black balls were too numerous. Mr. Bevill's neat style was often seen here, and Mr. George Lambton's well-nigh perfect hands have guided many a horse to victory. 'Roddy,' though not quite so good on the flat as over a country, was much more than useful, and Mr. Hedworth Barclay has been persistent in his essays. Captain Bewicke has not ridden very often, but his average of success is an excellent one, and Mr. W. H. Moore knew the course and turned his knowledge to good account; and, it may be added, the course was one that wanted knowing, for many horses went gaily down into one or other of the two dips nearing home and seemed to take an extraordinarily long time to get out again. Of late years Mr. Lushington—though Lewes is this gentleman's special course—has done excellent service here.

It is sad indeed to say good-bye to these delightful downs, to think that we shall no more make for the stand over the swelling expanse of turf, dotted with posts marking out the course, and see the field sweep along, their colours bright in the sunshine. 'Bush in'—the starting-place of the five-furlong course—will no more have a meaning. There is an exciting tale told of old Historian (he was before my time), who had been sent for to act as a retriever after his party had suffered an awful series of disasters, was backed for I do not know how many thousands, and left with his head turned the wrong way when the flag fell; though he got that useful head of his in front just a stride before the post was reached. But the end has come, and we must mournfully say good-bye to dear old Stockbridge!



CYCLING IN PORTUGAL

BY C. EDWARDES

EVEN taking its mountains into consideration, Portugal, as at present administered, appeals peculiarly to the cyclist. The country's trains move as slowly as the people themselves, and no one, unless an ardent antiquarian, would dream of pleasure when cramped in one of the many box-like diligences which crawl right and left from the railway stations to the drowsy little villages in the plains and the castellated old towns on the hills. Moreover, the sale of tobacco in Portugal is a Government monopoly (mortgaged, of course), and the tobacco smoked generally is therefore far from good. The atmosphere of the railway cars cannot thus be compared for sweetness with that of the butterfly haunted pine forests, the open heaths, and the invigorating Serras, whose grey or purple outlines are ever present in the land to pique the cyclist with their hints of big wolves and stirring descents after tedious climbs. I need say little about the advantage of being able to stop at will when one travels on one's own wheels. Looking at them from the window of a passing carriage, I should have been puzzled by certain little arrangements of tin pots and nursery windmills here and there in Portugal's vineyards and grainfields. With my cycle, however, it was different. I had

but to dismount, light a cigarette, and tarry for a zephyr to learn that the music coaxed from the pots by the rotating mills was designed to annoy the birds; even Portugal's nightingales (most strenuous of choristers) are checked by these discordant contrivances. This one instance may suggest others.

But all depends upon the roads, and about these I had at the outset no precise information. It seemed depressingly reasonable to fear that they would be no more prosperous than Dom Pedro's exchequer, with which they might be said to stand or fall. A preliminary run to Cintra was far from encouraging. I could

THE RUTS AND STONES AND ROOMY HOLES

not, as I approached it, admire this lovely mountain anything like adequately without first standing on my feet. The ruts and stones and roomy holes of the road really seemed more than accidental. I rested for the night in an excellent hotel on the Atlantic side of the mountain and entertained my misgivings. The moon hung above the enchanting spot; the murmur of falling waters through the woods and gardens, and the mild caressing air, flavoured with orange blossom and heliotrope, ought to have soothed away such misgivings. Yet they did not; no, even when aided by Collares wine that perfumed the palate as the flowers the air. I feared defeat, which no man likes in any circumstances.

Yet I need not have been so anxious. The very next morning an Englishman, who has known the land for nearly half a century (for his own sake, I am sorry it is so long), chanted the praises of Portugal's roads in a way that astonished me. It will save time if I pass on his recipe for one of Dom Pedro's thoroughfares of the first class. To begin with, a deep excavation is made; this is laid with large rocks, the interstices being filled by hand with stones; a layer of small stones comes next, and the road is completed with an upper crust of very small stones and gravel. The roller finally does its best to make it as smooth and hard as a slab of slate. I am very glad to be able to confirm the truth of this report. Portugal is a little country, and some of us think that her regard for the arts and more engaging attributes of the nineteenth century is as small as herself. Dom Manoel the Fortunate, of the fifteenth century, would undeniably be dissatisfied with her position in Europe at the present time if he could be resuscitated to behold it. Nevertheless, in the matter of her 'royal roads' she is great. Not uniformly, it must be admitted. But their excellence as a whole makes one oblivious (afterwards) of their infamy in parts.

From the summit of Cintra mountain I looked afar to the north, where the grey heights of Torres Vedras kissed the blue sky, and I bewailed the meagreness of the white line that was my highway. But this was before my anxieties were shown to be illusory.

Four-and-twenty hours later my cycle was satisfied with Portugal. By that time we were at Torres Vedras, sixty kilometres distant. For miles the going was perfect, and some of the winding inclines into the valleys among the mountains, which ninety years ago teemed with British soldiers, yielded keen and harmless sensations. The weather, which at Cintra had been a trifle boisterous, with rain squalls upon the wild tulip trees in the tangled garden of the old Moorish fortress on the hill, had softened; the heat was little more than genial; and the breeze was not obstructive. I had drunk several tumblers of 'vinho puro' at wayside taverns, at about a halfpenny the tumbler, and had already tasted the praiseworthy civility of the Portuguese peasants. It was nothing in objection to Portugal that at one turning of the road, where woods rose steeply on either hand, I narrowly missed taking a four-foot bronze snake right in the middle. The country abounds in reptiles, and it was just as well to become early acquainted with them. Nor are many of them venomous, though, if I may judge from an exhibit in the Coimbra

University Museum, they do on occasion attain the sufficient length of a couple of yards.

In this one day awheel, I had gone through perhaps half a score of villages, in none of which the dogs were a conspicuous trial; nor had any rural constable called upon me to show a certificate proving that I was licensed to cycle on the roads of Portugal. I had lunched at Mafra, the stupendous convent of which place makes a large blot on the landscape seen from Cintra, more than fifteen miles to the south; and the mechanic in charge of the famous chimes in the church towers had set the machinery in motion for me, so that the soldiers drilling on the grass plot in front of the building for nearly half an hour trod to the music. The perfume of the vine blossom had been with me all the day, and the nightingales in the fields had sung at noon, and later from the poplars above the aloes of the hedgerows. Nor had I suffered the shadow of an inconvenience save one, which caused me to limp when, as a sightseer, I was turned loose in the narrow cool streets of Torres, whose many escutcheoned houses show the innocent pride of birth that still possesses the Portuguese nation. I had thirsted and begged for a drink from a huge earthenware jar on a lady's shoulder. But hardly was the thing tilted at the proper angle—the lady smiling above and below her delicately pencilled moustache—when its handle broke off, and water-pot, water and all, dropped upon my toes. A trivial enough calamity, you see, though painful!

From the shattered walls of the lofty castle of Torres I gazed (after dinner) at the white little town beneath me, at the fire-coloured western sky, and the gracious panorama of woods and mountains which indicated my course for the morrow. Portugal seemed to me a very good land for the cyclist. And I thought much the same when, three weeks afterwards, the rain drove me into the train for Santarem, and I was again on the banks of the lordly placid Tagus.

In the meantime I had come to love Portugal's far-extending pine forests, and, I think, some of her people also. For amiability the latter have no equals in Europe. Expatriated Britons are not as a rule wont to dwell on the good points in the character of the people among whom they are exiled. I was glad, therefore, to have my inferences in this particular backed by the opinion of my fellow countrymen in Oporto. They are a warmhearted, gentle nation, bound, unless they change for the worse, always to play a lowly part in what may, for the sake of the phrase, be termed the European partnership.

For scores of miles my cycle and I were in the forests and pretty much alone, once we had passed the throng of wailing ox-carts and barelegged countrywomen, with produce on their heads, which are an unfailing feature of the outskirts of a Portuguese village in the early hours. The scent of the pines and the carols of the birds were a flattering prelude to the hot noon of each day. The peasants themselves seemed as garrulous and gay in the morning as the birds. Times were when I was compelled to alight and converse with a regiment of the stout-legged market ladies who blocked the road. Their pigs, and

'TELL ME, CABALHEIRO'

calves, and lambs, held by strings, went all ways, too, at sight of the cycle—much to the entertainment of every one. 'Tell me, cabalheiro,' one morning asked the spokeswoman of one of these crowds—a colossal maiden in many petticoats (none below her knees), and with a canary-coloured kerchief over her hair, beneath the eager poultry in a basket on her head: 'what is the difference between the ass there and your horse here?'

She pointed to a meek donkey with ample panniers and very long ears that already seemed vexed with the flies.

The riddle was much too hard for me.

'Oh,' said she, 'it is easy. Your horse neither eats, nor

drinks, nor sleeps, and it works always. It is a good little horse, and good to have!'

This was the view they all took of my cycle. Judging then by their compliments, one would suppose they knew nothing of travelling for pleasure. But no matter for that. One had but to look at them to realise the splendid advantage they enjoyed in breathing the superb tonic air of the land. Finer specimens of the human animal are nowhere to be seen than in the woods and wilds of Portugal.

I shall, I hope, always think with enthusiasm of the forest leagues between Alcobaca and Coimbra. The mountains are never very distant in the route. Here and there, as by Pombal, offshoots of them have to be crossed, and the pines cease for a kilometre or two, and give place to hot purple nudity. But, as a rule, they obtrude themselves only now and then. One is conscious of them without seeing them, save when there is an emphatic parting in the millions of twinkling tree trunks. Hereabout they do not assume to be grand, but they are always precious, whether castle-capped or as nature made them. One must get among the Serras of Beira to see the crimson and green magnificence of Portugal's mountains, above the vast forested slopes and deep ravines, bedded with foaming torrents, characteristic of this sublime province.

I knew from the map that Portugal had its share of rivers, but I was scarcely prepared to find them play so large a part in my pleasures and trials as a vagabond cyclist. They have cut such profound channels through the country, and their tributaries are like them, so that in a day's cycling one may several times be forced to ascend and descend two or three thousand feet. The descents, of course, are sufficiently agreeable when the road is good. Take that, for example, down to the bridge over the Mondego (Portugal's most classic stream) at Coimbra, approached from the south. Nothing could have been more delightful of its kind. I had been pushing rather wearily for a league or two from Condeixa, through gardens and flowery woods, when at length I came to my watershed. The white, and red, and pale blue buildings of the famous University City appeared before me across a chasm that may be two miles wide. Behind the terraced city (one of the most beautiful in Europe) rose gentle hills decked with olive trees and poppied barley between the trees. Higher still were the bolder outlines of hills raised to the dignity of mountains, with rocks and pines on their summits. And yet higher, their purple crests forming a noble barrier to the east, the

Serra da Estrella closed the landscape. From the Estrella mountains the Mondego courses in a broad bed toward the Atlantic. It, and nothing else, was accountable for the chasm that separated me from Coimbra. The run down to its shaky, many-arched bridge, with beggars and vendors of edible trifles besetting the approach, was stirring exercise. But it involved the inevitable after-climb, which was not so pleasant.

And as of the Mondego, so of the Douro, the Tamega, the Vouga, and the rest of them.

It was mere accident that saved me a huge ascent to the source of one of the Douro's many affluents in my journey south from Guimaraes, and also cheated me out of the corresponding dash down to Peso da Regoa. I was at Amarante, a most romantic old town on the Tamega, embosomed among wooded peaks, and in which the conditions of life must be much the same as when, a hundred years ago, the French left a bloody mark on the place. The din of Tamega's waters woke me early, so that well before six o'clock I was ready for the road. The costumes of the people in the strects, even at that early hour, would have warmed the soul of an artist. The beggars were especially vociferous. They held the bridge so that it was difficult to pass them. One little girl beat them all with her clamours of 'Coraçon!' ('Pity!') as she stood, with outstretched arm, pointing to the naked stumps of a legless man shrewdly tilted upon an ass. But having got by, I appealed to a patriarchal person for guidance on my way, and he promptly misdirected me. I was soon rising very very gradually on the most magnificent specimen of a highway that I have ever seen.

Hereabouts the mountains on the left bank of the Tamega fall abruptly, with an infinite number of curves and indentations to their long steep sides. The road was engineered down the valley through the woods that clothe the slopes. White and hard, and absolutely level, it was like running on glass. With little effort I rose and rose, riding all the while, until we were about five hundred feet above the river, on the other side of which also the mountains soared high. It was a lovely morning though cold, as our elevation and the hour required. The cloud wisps toyed with the tree tops, growing fainter and fainter as the blue of the sunlit sky above became more and more intense. There was no wind. The Tamega sang a constant song as it fretted its way over the valley rocks, and the birds joined it with their music from the oaks and chestnuts of the woods. Then the road became level, and for miles merely followed the sinuosities of the

mountain sides. It was impossible not to go fast. Red-capped shepherd-boys, lolling on rock points above me, shouted one to another, or ran like goats to see more of the cycle. Astonished girls, with wine-stained barrels on their heads, darted into the woods out of our way. One foolish fond mother snatched up a child (naked, save for an unassuming shift) and tossed it pell mell into a thicket of stinging nettles, so that it lamented loudly as I passed it by. And other mothers, less foolish but just as fond, clasped their babes closely, and only stared or muttered an audible 'Jesu Cristo!' For, though the road was so amazing, I was here in the wilds, where tourists are not known, and a cyclist is more even than a dancing bear.

It was not until the road began to descend with the same fine caution as in its ascent that I understood I was astray. I ought to have climbed another two thousand feet or so. Instead of that I was speeding down to Tamega's level. For a time I was angry, both with myself and the old man who had put me wrong. Yet on consideration it did not matter much. Ere I was at the Douro Valley station of Marco de Canavezes, I had become enthusiastic about Portuguese road-makers, and had convinced myself that it would have been blameworthy to have missed this scenery on the lower Tamega's banks. I had to wait three hours for a train at the station, a circumstance that irritated my impetuous cycle. But we had a certain compensation in the spectacle of a droll female improvisatrice, with a long staff in her hands, a great deal of wine in her body, and boundless impudence of mien, who stood at the door of the Marco wine shop and sang tipsily for all comers. Her verses about 'Good Queen Victoria' (inspired by two pence) were somewhat applauded by the half-dozen wayfarers, two being beggars like herself, who formed her audience. Later, I am sorry to say, her compositions became rude and her manner aggressive, and when I last saw her she was being forcibly urged, struggling, up the road by the tavern-keeper, a railway porter and another man, on her way to the next village.

Our short railway journey to Peso da Regoa, under the shadow of the great mountain mass we ought to have traversed, was very interesting. My *vis-à-vis* in the car was a peasant girl with much valuable gold on her. She, too, was impressed by the giddy height of the slim bridges that bore us over the abysmal rifts and channels of the streams that run down laterally towards the great Douro. Though it may seem a ridiculous saying, I felt that I should be safer on my cycle anywhere in Portugal than

on this remarkable railway, which may, however, of course, be strongly recommended for its picturesqueness as well as its thrills.

That all the pleasure of these mountain rides hung upon the weather I was made aware in the third week of my travels. By then I had become foolishly confident in Portugal's blue skies. But I was warned. In Oporto they had told me that a certain Spanish prophet, whose meteorological guesses are received with respect far and wide in the Peninsula, had prophesied rain and storms for the ensuing week. The prediction seemed absurd. I laughed it to scorn, and for two days more ran in warm sunshine, this time among the gardens and orchards of merry Minho, where everyone sings while he works, and the vines climb sixty feet to the tops of the roadside cherry trees. Nor was I disheartened by a rattling shower at Bom Jesus, to which we ascended by an elevator.

Forty-eight hours later the Douro's mountains were all black with clouds, and the wind that sighed down the pent valley whispered unmistakably of rain. The day that followed was most unpleasant. My programme urged me to pass from the Douro to the Vouga. I did so, though with much inconvenience. Of the fifty miles or so of my journey from Peso da Regoa to S. Pedro do Sul, more than half was determinedly uphill, or rather up mountains. And it rained with little intermission from the hour after I had crossed Regoa's fine bridge and begun the long ascent to the watershed of the Serra de Montemur.

It was one of those experiences that ought to humble the cyclist, if he needs humbling. And yet I was so interested by the country and the unadulterated rustics of these uplands that I did not groan all the way. The latter wore their straw overcoats in honour of the weather. They and their families looked with considerable excitement at the cycle. So did their dogs, who were here an extreme nuisance, and very large. Once, when sheltering under a fine chestnut tree, I had almost to act the part of a baited bull, and it was only by shrewd stone practice that I could keep them aloof till their respective masters appeared. I was soaked when we came to the summit of the Montemur plateau. But the road up here was not inches deep in mud, as a couple of thousand feet lower, and there was distinct satisfaction in speeding over the leagues in the descent to Castro Daire, a secluded little town on a rock heap in the middle of a small cup-shaped hollow in the woods, with a brawling river crossed by a handsome stone bridge in the bottom of the hollow.

The remaining six leagues to S. Pedro do Sul were all through woods on the mountain sides, long ascents and short descents, and in pouring rain. At S. Pedro, drowned rat that I was, I must needs enter the house of a certain noble lady, mistaking it for the hotel. The real hotel was not by any means so nice a building, nor were the landlord's clothes at all a good fit. But

SHREWD STONE PRACTICE

that the lady bore no resentment for the invasion of her hall I was informed over my dinner by the visit of a polite young gentleman, who presented his mother's compliments and the inquiry in what way the baroness could be useful to me.

S. Pedro do Sul is a charming place among lofty mountains, marvellously coloured by heather and herbage. I hope at another

time to see it under blue skies. It is memorable to me for something else as well as its beauty. A very large nail, with an upturned point, here yielded us a puncture, in the repair of which the village took lively interest. This was the only wound of the kind that Portugal inflicted upon us. A certain local gentleman of the legal persuasion much aided in the repair of this puncture, and it is no fault of mine that he did not subsequently become the owner of the cycle itself, for which he was eager to pay a somewhat extravagant price. Circumstances, however, compelled me to leave Lisbon rather before the day when he hoped to be in the capital with the bank notes ready.

At Mangualde, on the northern fringe of the impressive Serra da Estrella, we received our quietus. It was rather unexpected, and perhaps I ought not to have been so hasty. I had ridden to Mangualde through rain in the morning, halting to breakfast at the ancient though rather bleak city of Vizeu, the knotted groining and dull, dusty gilding of whose cathedral interior engrossed me for a while, as well as Gran Vasco's quite noteworthy paintings. The afternoon was bright, and my first comparatively near view of the Estrellas was most winsome. They stretched for fifty miles across the horizon, with snow spots on their purple peaks. The evening, too, closed fair, though they had no faith in its portents at the hotel where I stopped, with windows looking full at the mountains.

The thermometer here was only in the fifties while I dined, with a pretty crimson flush on the western clouds above the extensive green lowlands to cheer me. My landlord and the ladies of his family, solicitous for my comfort, arranged themselves to talk to me while I ate. They told me of the snow that comes to Mangualde in winter. Further, they surprised me by their indignation about the railway in their little town. 'Such inventions,' said the gentleman, 'may be good for large centres like Lisbon, but not for small provincial towns!' The explanation followed. 'Before there was a station here, there was on Saints' days no moving on the high roads just outside Mangualde, so great was the crowd of asses and ox-carts and people of all kinds, with things to sell and wanting to buy things. But now——' Even Portugal has its cheap market tickets, which, it seemed, in this district profit Vizeu more than Mangualde.

From his grievance, the landlord rose to an excited account of the game and scenic wonders of the crimsoned mountains over the way. He pointed to some enormous eight-tined granulated antlers above the door in witness of his words. In short, he left

me eager to get off to the Estrellas in the morning. But it was not to be. The next day was the worst of all. After one more stroll through the little highland town, I made for the railway station. I was so disappointed that for once I did not find entertainment in the greetings and requests for coppers or cigarettes from the prisoners in the local gaol. These gentlemen and ladies suffer very much in public in Portugal. They crowd to the unglazed, barred windows of their palace (it is sometimes that really, though a disestablished one), and seem on the whole to enjoy themselves with jest and song.

SHELTERING A FLOCK OF GASPING GOATS

The rain on this day continued as long as we were in the highlands. It did not, however, prevent me looking with eyes of admiration and desire upon the white road that ran parallel with the rails down the valley of the Dao at a most attractive gradient, and nearly always embraced closely by the dear pine trees of the land. At Luso, which is Busaco, I was tempted to alight, under patriotic impulses. But I forbore, and was content to gaze upon the wooded heights and the formidable deep red and grey gullies which gave us and the French so much trouble on August 27, 1810. Busaco is quite one of the choice beauty-spots of Portugal, and no one who rejoices in woodland scenery

should pass it by. The Government has chosen it as a site for square miles of experiments in forestry, all of which have hitherto succeeded.

Once again in Lisbon, with a blazing sun and clear skies, I made a somewhat conventional, yet very agreeable little scamper, south of the Tagus to Setubal. Here also I was in the forests the whole way, save when crossing the scarlet mountains of Arrabida. The reader will be weary of this repeated mention of Portugal's trees. But it is inevitable in the circumstances. For my part, I was never better pleased than when in their midst. They gave me an aromatic and salubrious atmosphere, and the shade so dear to the wayfarer to these latitudes. Nor were they wholly lacking in bright little wayside pictures. A single umbrageous veteran of a tree, for example, would be seen sheltering a flock of gasping brown sheep or goats, with the complacent custodian in their midst; or an ox-team, and the driver would be discovered fast asleep under its shadow, heedless of all the snakes that might glide from the heather and brambles upon a reckless tour of exploration.

Nearer Setubal, with the towering rock of Palmella close to the right, I came to prolific orchards. Such apples, even in May! And the ripe cherries were displayed with so hospitable a trust in the traveller that I could do no less than pay the owners the compliment of a direct appreciation of their fruit. The hot ascent of the famous rock was by no means to be shirked. From the acres of its deserted walls and fortress one beholds a vast landscape. Hence it seemed to me I saw all the province of Alemtejo, and it also seemed to me that the whole province was one infinite pine forest, strangely flat by comparison with Portugal north of the Tagus, though studded faintly in the distance with grey mountains of no great elevation.

The visitor to Setubal will not fail to eat many of its oranges. They are aristocrats of their kind. For these and its sardines the place is celebrated. My hotel bedroom here commanded a view of the roof of one of the local tinning factories, as well as a corner of glistening blue sea. I liked not the fishy smell that proceeded from the establishment, but I rejoiced in the spectacle of seven or eight cats stretched on the roof surfeiting, with expanded nostrils and softly swaying tails, upon the same odour. Portugal is full of cats. In Lisbon they purr through the streets in companies, with proud disregard of dogs and men. But perhaps their lot is happiest of all in Setubal.

I have already hinted at the ease with which the cyclist may,

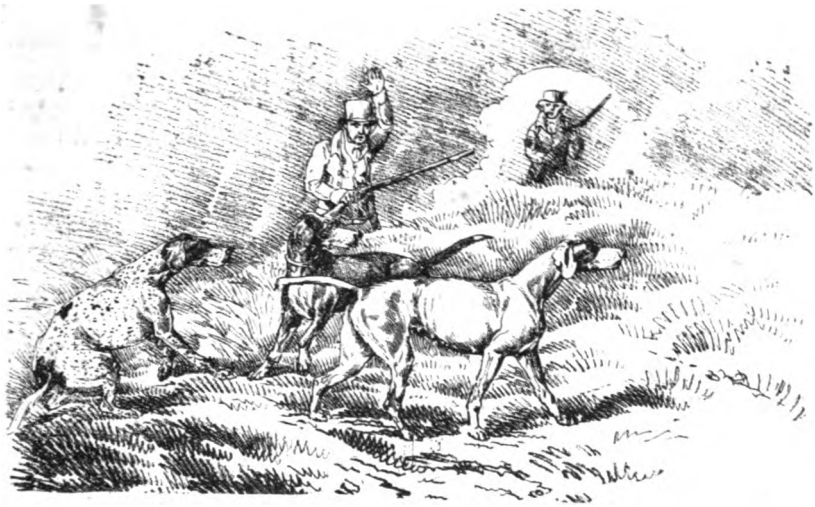
weather and his legs permitting, go anywhere in Portugal. To this must be added something about hotel accommodation.

Mangualde may serve fairly as typical of the board and lodging to be had elsewhere in the land from Lisbon to Braga. Here I took them by surprise. They had nothing in the house, and did not expect to be called upon to bed a stranger that night. Yet in less than an hour I sat to a dinner of macaroni soup, roast veal with pork, roast chicken and salad, the never-failing 'pescada' or hake, spinach, cakes, oranges, Estrella cheese and wine. Coffee followed, with Portuguese cognac. I slept on a clean bed, no harder than other Portuguese beds, and with not more than one visible insect in it. In the morning I ate buttered toast and drank coffee. The entire household were diligent and kindly in serving me, and my cycle was allowed to slumber in my own bedroom. For all this my bill was three shillings.

Nothing wins upon one more in Portugal than the uniform courtesy and gentleness of the people, combined with an integrity that proves they are not kind only to veil their cruelty. There are, I am assured, plenty of bad qualities among the people, and no doubt it is so; but the cyclist, unless he be a very discerning or analytical psychologist as well, need discover none of them. They are poor, of course. That, however, is not altogether their fault, if it be a fault at all. Some of them seem to sigh plaintively for the good things of this life that are only to be bought with the coins current in this life, but the vast majority seem resigned to the endurable poverty inherited from their parents and so insistently forced upon them by unscrupulous statesmen. As a nation the Portuguese are republicans, without the spirit or encouragement to combine and break loose from the men who govern them abominably as servants of the King. This is a truth which one learns with remarkable confirmations when travelling at discretion on a cycle.

Yet they are proud as well as poor. At S. Pedro do Sul I was zealously waited upon for two days by an exemplary middle-aged domestic, who at first declined to have her services acknowledged by a tip of 100 reis, or rather less than fourpence. But we came to a compromise which pleased us both. To oblige me, she pocketed the bank note. To oblige her in return, I drank a stirrup glass of Kummel, for which, to oblige me once more, she consented to charge the nominal sum of one penny. She had a very coarse pair of principal toes to her bare feet, but I avow I felt it an honour to shake the proffered hand of this high-spirited lady.

In my paper I have not dwelt upon the architectural and historic charms in store for the cyclist in Portugal who cares for such matters. Yet these are really very substantial. The churches and conventual houses at Mafra, Alcobaça, Batalha, Coimbra, Braga, Vizeu, &c., are not to be passed unvisited. Batalha in particular excites wonder, though experts tell us it is not quite the world's marvel it has been held to be. Its forest of pinnacles comes as a piquant change in the heart of the forest of pine trees through which it must be reached. It has, however, an inn of a singularly base kind. Oporto and Lisbon are, of course, touched by the transforming finger of cosmopolitanism. But even in these two cities it is not difficult to realise that one is in a country of old fashions. Neither of them can be recommended to the cyclist for the exercise that may be supposed to be most dear to him; they are both notorious for ill-paved roads and streets of extraordinary steepness. But the Briton who visits them with his cycle may be glad, at any rate, to take quiet constitutionals now and then in their enclosed or other grounds, where he will meet with one or two fellow countrymen, as well as a variety of ardent young noblemen in preposterous costumes, who appear to be as eager to beat records in ring-riding as any of our own subsidised professionals.



NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

THIS true story of cricket in Scotland has amused me much. A gentleman, himself a keen cricketer, was anxious to introduce the game into his neighbourhood, where as yet it was practically unknown. He laboured long and diligently to instil a knowledge and love of cricket into his various gardeners, helpers, keepers, and other employés on the estate, but for long did so quite ineffectually. At length, after at least two years of tuition and coaching, he really believed them to have mastered both the theory and the practice of the game, and felt he might venture to challenge the eleven of the nearest village where cricket was known, thinking thereby to evoke some element of enthusiasm. To his gardener he deputed the task of marking out the pitch and fixing the wickets, which the man did with the utmost care and precision, looking on his work with pardonable pride before the match began. The home team lost the toss, and the enemy began to bat. Ere long the first man was bowled, to the secret joy and satisfaction of the enthusiastic coach. Soon afterwards another wicket went down; this time the gardener ran to the assistance of the umpire, and helped him to readjust the sticks. The bowler, warming to his work and full of confidence, sent down a ball with all his

strength, and knocked the middle stump clean out of the ground. This was more than the gardener could stand. With a scowl he stalked up to the bowler, and shaking his fist in his face exclaimed: 'See here, maun, if you ca' ower ane of they sticks again, I'll bash y'r heed!'

A keen lover of yachting writes to me: 'Mr. Orr-Ewing, M.P., has done well in building the "Rainbow," as she may be the first of a flight of schooners of her class, and revive the racing of them which has died out of late years. The yacht is not yet designed that shall walk over such opponents as the "Satanita," "Ailsa," "Bona" and Co.; but the "Rainbow," to say the least of it, holds her own with them. I admire her extremely when at anchor, but (as a thing of beauty) she rather disappoints me with her canvas set. I suppose her skipper finds her fore-topsail more bother than it is worth during the races on these short courses where there is necessarily much beating to windward, but the eye pines for it badly. "The old order changeth, and giveth place unto the new," and the fiat has gone forth that every racing boat now must be of the greyhound type. Doubtless they are faster than the old solid yachts, but I confess that I should like to have seen the days when such vessels as the "Dauntless" and "Cambria" started on 3,000-mile races. The late owner of the latter gave me a picture of her tearing along beneath a cloud of canvas over the Atlantic rollers, and it stirs the soul within me every time I look at it—so full is the ship of movement, grace, and power.

'I met the "Rainbow" and her two opponents rounding the Needles on their return from a race round the Isle of Wight, when half a gale of wind was blowing and all the sailing vessels at Cowes were either remaining at anchor or well snugged down. The schooner was leading, and it spoke well for their capacities of going cleanly through the water that on such a day their large mainsails were almost dry! The sea must have been considerable off St. Catherine's, as inside the Solent the mainsail of our own little four-tonner had three reefs down and was wet nearly to the peak! Amongst the smaller racers the "Strathendrick" is perhaps the smartest new boat of the year; there are a host of other beauties, but as to their doings and the winning flags that they fly, are they not written in the chronicles of every yachting paper on the bookstalls?'

Soon after this number of the Magazine is published the St. Leger will be run. I do not propose to express any opinions as to the probable winner, for I find writing so many weeks ahead places one at too great disadvantage. I published my belief that Disraeli would win the Two Thousand, and he did; I was still more confident (though, never blind to possibilities, that confidence was mildly and modestly worded) that he would win the Derby, and he did not. I won't touch upon his chance for a great Doncaster race, because who can say whether he can be induced to gallop? Horses make and lose reputations with strange celerity. Jeddah was scorned when he went to Epsom. He had failed twice as a two-year-old, twice also as a three, and his one success seemed specially to emphasise the fact that he was scarcely in the 'moderate' class which comes between the 'useful' and the 'bad,' useful being behind the 'good.' Now, however, I observe a disposition to argue that Jeddah is really a good horse, there being no better reason to advance for that faith than that he has twice beaten Batt. He won the Prince of Wales's Stakes at Ascot very handsomely, no doubt; but so he should have done, with nothing better than Batt behind him? He may win on the seventh of this month, but if he does, I think it will be because the others are either very bad or resolutely indisposed to gallop.

Up to the present time I fear we must admit that the two-year-olds are moderate. Flying Fox may be a good colt, and if, in the course of the next few days after the publication of this number, it is shown that Calix is a better—both are sons of Orme, who is coming to the front as a sire—we shall probably be developing 'class.' But of the rest, St. Gris, Eventail, Musa, and Desmond are too close together to suggest that either is really good. The first three I should handicap at even weights. If they met again opinions would differ as to which would win, though many good judges would expect to see the form in the Prince of Wales's Stakes at Goodwood upset, and Eventail, who then won by a head, just beaten. The Chesterfield Stakes at Newmarket showed Desmond a neck better than Eventail, and No Trumps has closely pressed the Prince of Wales's filly. Victoria May is not a very long way better than Harrow, who, with an advantage in the weights, just beat her at Lingfield: Harrow is not in the first class, and Vara is believed to be not far in capacity from the second in the Lingfield race. Amurath, who beat Desmond in

the Brocklesby, has lost prestige, and, it is generally fancied, would not have the better of Lord Dunraven's colt now. St. Valentine II. had so little to do in the race he won that, even if, as is probable, he can be made 10 lb. better, it may not then amount to much. It remains to be seen what the autumn will produce.

It is a dreadful thing to publish a book and know that there are mistakes in it; that readers will come across them, reflect, and either say, 'What a donkey this man is!' or else accept and store up in their memories an incorrect version of the matter therein discussed. I am in this melancholy position at present, and if I plead carelessness rather than ignorance, one is not much more excusable than the other. In my lately published book 'The Turf,' I have stated that, in the race for the Epsom Cup, Robert the Devil had his revenge on Bend Or for his defeat in the Derby. Now of course this is a slip, and, as it happens, I am about the last person who should have made it: for this reason. I was much associated at the time with Tom Cannon, Robert the Devil's jockey, and in my 'Recollections of Stockbridge,' earlier in this number, might have talked about a quaint little pony at Danebury, who had been a companion of Robert's, and had had his tail nibbled half off by that famous animal, who used to amuse himself in this odd way. When 'Fores' Sporting Notes' were projected, I was asked to write for the first number, and contributed an article called 'A Famous Match,' which was made up of the history of this very Epsom Cup, as to the circumstances connected with which I chanced to have special knowledge. I traced the careers of the two horses, Bend Or and Robert the Devil, until their last meeting in this event, and described it in detail; and in my book, by a slip of the pen, I make the wrong horse win that particular race! I don't quite see how I can plausibly excuse the blunder, and can only penitently acknowledge it.

THE

BADMINTON MAGAZINE

October 1898

SOME EXPERIENCES OF AN IRISH R.M.

BY E. Œ. SOMERVILLE AND MARTIN ROSS

No. I.—GREAT-UNCLE McCARTHY

A RESIDENT Magistracy in Ireland is not an easy thing to come by nowadays; neither is it a very attractive job; yet on the evening when I first propounded the idea to the young lady who had recently consented to become Mrs. Sinclair Yeates, it seemed glittering with possibilities. There was, on that occasion, a sunset, and a string band playing 'The Gondoliers,' and there was also an ingenuous belief in the omnipotence of a godfather of Philippa's—(Philippa was the young lady)—who had once been a member of the Government.

I was then climbing the steep ascent of the Captains towards my Majority. I have no fault to find with Philippa's godfather; he did all and more than even Philippa had expected; nevertheless, I had attained to the dignity of mud major, and had spent a good deal on postage stamps, and on railway fares to interview people of influence, before I found myself in the hotel at Skebawn, opening long envelopes addressed to 'Major Yeates, R.M.'

My most immediate concern, as anyone who has spent nine weeks at Mrs. Raverty's hotel will readily believe, was to leave it at the earliest opportunity; but in those nine weeks I had learned, amongst other painful things, a little, a very little, of the methods of the artizan in the West of Ireland. Finding

a house had been easy enough. I had had my choice of several, each with some hundreds of acres of shooting, thoroughly poached, and a considerable portion of the roof intact. I had selected one; the one that had the largest extent of roof in proportion to the shooting, and had been assured by my landlord that in a fortnight or so it would be fit for occupation.

'There's a few little odd things to be done,' he said easily; 'a lick of paint here and there, and a slap of plaster——'

I am short-sighted, I am also of Irish extraction, both facts that make for toleration, but even I thought he was understating the case. So did the contractor.

At the end of three weeks the latter reported progress, which mainly consisted of the facts that the plumber had accused the carpenter of stealing sixteen feet of his inch-pipe to run a bell wire through, and that the carpenter had replied that he wished the divil might run the plumber through a wran's quill. The plumber, having reflected upon the carpenter's parentage, the work of renovation had merged in battle, and at the next Petty Sessions I was reluctantly compelled to allot to each combatant seven days, without the option of a fine.

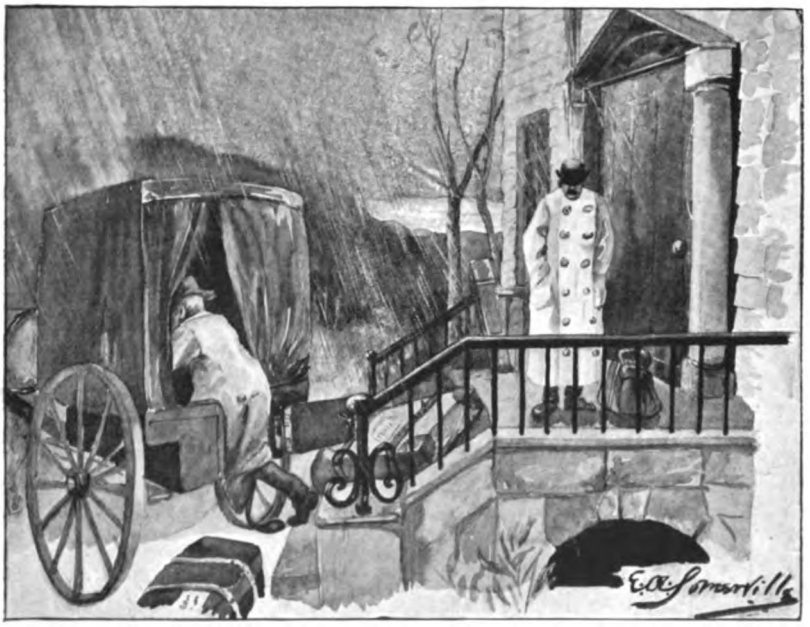
These and kindred difficulties extended in an unbroken chain through the summer months, until a certain wet and windy day in October, when, with my baggage, I drove over to establish myself at Shreelane. It was a tall, ugly house of three stories high, its walls faced with weather-beaten slates, its windows staring, narrow, and vacant. Round the house ran an area, in which grew some laurustinus and holly bushes among ash heaps, and nettles, and broken bottles. I stood on the steps, waiting for the door to be opened, while the rain sluiced upon me from a broken eaveshoot that had, amongst many other things, escaped the notice of my landlord. I thought of Philippa, and of her plan, broached in to-day's letter, of having the hall done up as a sitting-room.

The door opened, and revealed the hall. It struck me that I had perhaps overestimated its possibilities. Among them I had certainly not included a flagged floor, sweating with damp, and a reek of cabbage from the adjacent kitchen stairs. A large elderly woman, with a red face, and a cap worn helmet-wise on her forehead, swept me a magnificent curtsey as I crossed the threshold.

'Your honour's welcome——' she began, and then every door in the house slammed in obedience to the gust that drove through it. With something that sounded like 'Mend ye for a back door!'

Mrs. Cadogan abandoned her opening speech and made for the kitchen stairs. (Improbable as it may appear, my housekeeper was called Cadogan, a name made locally possible by being pronounced Caydogawn.)

Only those who have been through a similar experience can know what manner of afternoon I spent. I am a martyr to colds in the head, and I felt one coming on. I made a laager in front of the dining-room fire, with a tattered leather screen and the dinner table, and gradually, with cigarettes and strong tea, baffled the smell of must and cats, and fervently trusted



I STOOD ON THE STEPS, WAITING FOR THE DOOR TO BE OPENED

that the rain might avert a threatened visit from my landlord. I was then but superficially acquainted with Mr. Florence McCarthy Knox and his habits.

At about 4.30, when the room had warmed up, and my cold was yielding to treatment, Mrs. Cadogan entered and informed me that 'Mr. Flurry' was in the yard, and would be thankful if I'd go out to him, for he couldn't come in. Many are the privileges of the female sex; had I been a woman I should unhesitatingly have said that I had a cold in my head. Being a man, I huddled on a mackintosh, and went out into the yard.

My landlord was there on horseback, and with him there was a man standing at the head of a stout grey animal. I recognised with despair that I was about to be compelled to buy a horse.

'Good afternoon, Major,' said Mr. Knox in his slow, sing-song brogue; 'it's rather soon to be paying you a visit, but I thought you might be in a hurry to see the horse I was telling you of.'

I could have laughed. As if I were ever in a hurry to see a horse. I thanked him, and suggested that it was rather wet for horse-dealing.

'Oh, it's nothing when you're used to it,' replied Mr. Knox. His gloveless hands were red and wet, the rain ran down his nose, and his covert coat was soaked to a sodden brown. I thought that I did not want to become used to it. My relations with horses have been of a purely military character. I have endured the Sandhurst riding school, I have galloped for an impetuous general, I have been steward at regimental races, but none of these feats has altered my opinion that the horse, as a means of locomotion, is obsolete. Nevertheless, the man who accepts a resident magistracy in the south-west of Ireland voluntarily retires into the prehistoric age; to institute a stable became inevitable.

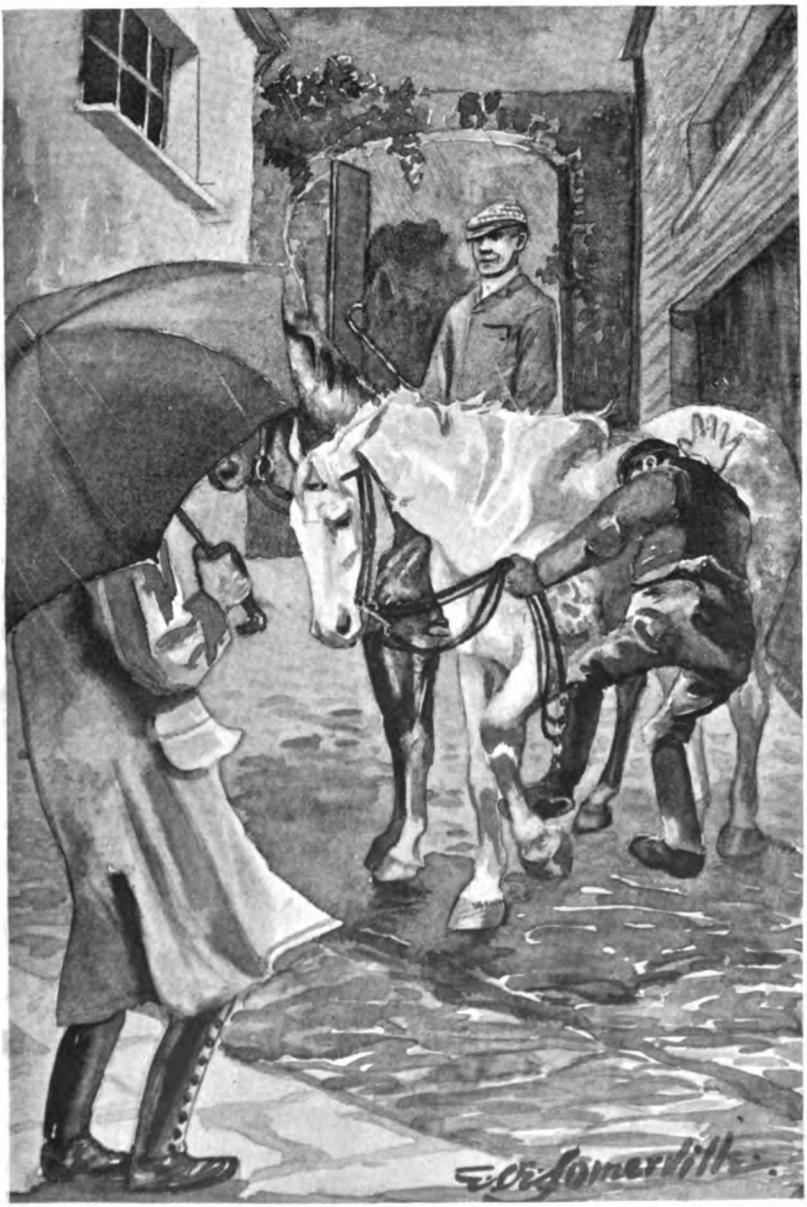
'You ought to throw a leg over him,' said Mr. Knox, 'and you're welcome to take him over a fence or two if you like. He's a nice flippant jumper.'

Even to my unexacting eye the grey horse did not seem to promise flippancy, nor did I at all desire to find that quality in him. I explained that I wanted something to drive, and not to ride.

'Well, that's a fine raking horse in harness,' said Mr. Knox, looking at me with his serious grey eyes, 'and you'd drive him with a sop of hay in his mouth. Bring him up here, Michael.'

Michael abandoned his efforts to kick the grey horse's forelegs into a becoming position, and led him up to me.

I regarded him from under my umbrella with a quite unreasonable disfavour. He had the dreadful beauty of a horse in a toyshop, as chubby, as wooden, and as conscientiously dappled, but it was unreasonable to urge this as an objection, and I was incapable of finding any more technical drawback. Yielding to circumstance, I 'threw my leg' over the brute, and after pacing gravely round the quadrangle that formed the yard, and jolting to my entrance gate and back, I decided that as he had neither fallen down nor kicked me off, it was worth paying twenty-five pounds for him, if only to get in out of the rain.



MICHAEL ABANDONED HIS EFFORTS TO KICK THE GREY HORSE'S FORELEGS INTO A BECOMING POSITION

Mr. Knox accompanied me into the house and had a drink. He was a fair, spare young man, who looked like a stable boy among gentlemen, and a gentleman among stable boys. He belonged to a clan that cropped up in every grade of society in the county, from Sir Valentine Knox of Castle Knox down to the auctioneer Knox, who bore the attractive title of Larry the Liar. So far as I could judge, Florence McCarthy of that ilk occupied a shifting position about midway in the tribe. I had met him at dinner at Sir Valentine's, I had heard of him at an illicit auction, held by Larry the Liar, of rum stolen from a wreck. They were 'Black Protestants,' all of them, in virtue of their descent from a godly soldier of Cromwell, and all were prepared at any moment of the day or night to sell a horse.

'You'll be apt to find this place a bit lonesome after the hotel,' remarked Mr. Flurry, sympathetically, as he placed his foot in its steaming boot on the hob, 'but it's a fine sound house anyway, and lots of rooms in it, though indeed, to tell you the truth, I never was through the whole of them since the time my great-uncle, Denis McCarthy, died here. The dear knows I had enough of it that time.' He paused, and lit a cigarette—one of my best, and quite thrown away upon him. 'Those top floors, now,' he resumed, 'I wouldn't make too free with them. There's some of them would jump under you like a spring bed. Many's the night I was in and out of those attics, following my poor uncle when he had the bad turn on him—the horrors, y' know—there were nights he never stopped walking through the house. Good Lord! will I ever forget the morning he said he saw the devil coming up the avenue! "Look at the two horns on him," says he, and he out with his gun and shot him, and, begad, it was his own donkey!'

Mr. Knox gave a couple of short laughs. He seldom laughed, having in unusual perfection the gravity of manner that is bred by horse-dealing, probably from the habitual repression of all emotion save disparagement.

The autumn evening, grey with rain, was darkening in the tall windows, and the wind was beginning to make bullying rushes among the shrubs in the area; a shower of soot rattled down the chimney and fell on the hearthrug.

'More rain coming,' said Mr. Knox, rising composedly: 'you'll have to put a goose down these chimneys some day soon, it's the only way in the world to clean them. Well, I'm for the road. You'll come out on the grey next week, I hope; the hounds'll be meeting here. Give a roar at him coming in at his

jumps.' He threw his cigarette into the fire and extended a hand to me. 'Good-bye, Major, you'll see plenty of me and my hounds before you're done. There's a power of foxes in the plantations here.'

This was scarcely reassuring for a man who hoped to shoot woodcock, and I hinted as much.

'Oh, is it the cock?' said Mr. Flurry; 'b'leeve me, there never was a woodcock yet that minded hounds, now, no more than they'd mind rabbits! The best shoots ever I had here, the hounds were in it the day before.'

When Mr. Knox had gone, I began to picture myself going across country roaring, like a man on a fire engine, while Philippa put the goose down the chimney; but when I sat down to write to her I did not feel equal to being humorous about it. I dilated ponderously on my cold, my hard work, and my loneliness, and eventually went to bed at ten o'clock full of cold shivers and hot whisky-and-water.

After a couple of hours of feverish dozing, I began to understand what had driven Great-Uncle McCarthy to perambulate the house by night. Mrs. Cadogan had assured me that the Pope of Rome hadn't a betther bed undher him than myself; wasn't I down on the new flog mattherass the old masther bought in Father Scanlan's auction? By the smell I recognised that 'flog' meant flock, otherwise I should have said my couch was stuffed with old boots. I have seldom spent a more wretched night. The rain drummed with soft fingers on my window panes; the house was full of noises. I seemed to see Great-Uncle McCarthy ranging the passages with Flurry at his heels; several times I thought I heard him. Whisperings seemed borne on the wind through my keyhole, boards creaked in the room overhead, and once I could have sworn that a hand passed, groping, over the panels of my door. I am, I may admit, a believer in ghosts; I even take in a paper that deals with their culture, but I cannot pretend that on that night I looked forward to a manifestation of Great-Uncle McCarthy with any enthusiasm.

The morning broke stormily, and I woke to find Mrs. Cadogan's understudy, a grimy nephew of about eighteen, standing by my bedside, with a black bottle in his hand.

'There's no bath in the house, sir,' was his reply to my command; 'but me A'nt said, would ye like a taggeen?'

This alternative proved to be a glass of raw whisky. I declined it.

I look back to that first week of housekeeping at Shreelane

as to a comedy excessively badly staged, and striped with lurid melodrama. Towards its close I was positively home-sick for Mrs. Raverty's, and I had not a single clean pair of boots. I am not one of those who hold the convention that in Ireland the rain never ceases, day or night, but I must say that my first November at Shreelane was composed of weather of which my friend Flurry Knox remarked that you wouldn't meet a Christian out of doors, unless it was a snipe or a dispensary doctor. To this lamentable category might be added a resident magistrate. Daily, shrouded in mackintosh, I set forth for the Petty Sessions Courts of my wide district; daily, in the inevitable atmosphere of wet frieze and perjury, I listened to indictments of old women who plucked geese alive, of publicans whose hospitality to their friends broke forth uncontrollably on Sunday afternoons, of 'parties' who, in the language of the police sergeant, were subtly defined as 'not to say dhrunk, but in good fighting thrim.'

I got used to it all in time—I suppose one can get used to anything—I even became callous to the surprises of Mrs. Cadogan's cooking. As the weather hardened and the woodcock came in, and one by one I discovered and nailed up the rat holes, I began to find life endurable, and even to feel some remote sensation of home coming when the grey horse turned in at the gate of Shreelane.

The one feature of my establishment to which I could not become inured was the pervading sub-presence of some thing or things which, for my own convenience, I summarised as Great-Uncle McCarthy. There were nights on which I was certain that I heard the inebriate shuffle of his foot overhead, the touch of his fumbling hand against the walls. There were dark times before the dawn when sounds went to and fro, the moving of weights, the creaking of doors, a far-away rapping in which was a workmanlike suggestion of the undertaker, a rumble of wheels on the avenue. Once I was impelled to the perhaps imprudent measure of cross-examining Mrs. Cadogan. Mrs. Cadogan, taking the preliminary precaution of crossing herself, asked me fatefully what day of the week it was.

'Friday!' she repeated after me. 'Friday! The Lord save us! 'Twas a Friday the old masther was buried.'

At this point a saucepan opportunely boiled over, and Mrs. Cadogan fled with it to the scullery, and was seen no more.

In the process of time I brought Great-Uncle McCarthy down to a fine point. On Friday nights he made coffins and drove hearses, during the rest of the week he rarely did more than patter and shuffle in the attics over my head.

One night, about the middle of December, I awoke, suddenly aware that some noise had fallen like a heavy stone into my dreams. As I felt for the matches it came again, the long, grudging groan and the uncompromising bang of the cross door at the head of the kitchen stairs. I told myself that it was a draught that had done it, but it was a perfectly still night. Even as I listened, a sound of wheels on the avenue shook the stillness. The thing was getting past a joke. In a few minutes I was stealthily groping my way down my own staircase, with a box of matches in my hand, enforced by scientific curiosity, but none the less armed with a stick. I stood in the dark at the top of the back stairs and listened; the snores of Mrs. Cadogan and her nephew Peter rose tranquilly from their respective lairs. I descended to the kitchen and lit a candle; there was nothing unusual there, except a great portion of the Cadogan wearing apparel, which was arranged at the fire, and was being serenaded by two crickets. Whatever had opened the door, my household was blameless.

The kitchen was not attractive, yet I felt indisposed to leave it. None the less, it appeared to be my duty to inspect the yard. I put the candle on the table and went forth into the outer darkness. Not a sound was to be heard. The night was very cold, and so dark, that I could scarcely distinguish the roofs of the stables against the sky; the house loomed tall and oppressive above me; I was conscious of how lonely it stood in the dumb and barren country. Spirits were certainly futile creatures, childish in their manifestations, stupidly content with the old machinery of raps and rumbles. I thought how fine a scene might be played on a stage like this; if I were a ghost, how bluely I would glimmer at the windows, how whimperingly chatter in the wind. Something whirled out of the darkness above me, and fell with a flop on the ground, just at my feet. I jumped backwards, in point of fact I made for the kitchen door, and, with my hand on the latch, stood still and waited. Nothing further happened; the thing that lay there did not stir. I struck a match. The moment of tension turned to bathos as the light flickered on nothing more fateful than a dead crow.

Dead it certainly was. I could have told that without looking at it; but why should it, at some considerable period after its death, fall from the clouds at my feet. But did it fall from the clouds? I struck another match, and stared up at the impenetrable face of the house. There was no hint of solution in

the dark windows, but I determined to go up and search the rooms that gave upon the yard.

How cold it was! I can feel now the frozen musty air of those attics, with their rat-eaten floors and wall papers furred with damp. I went softly from one to another, feeling like a burglar in my own house, and found nothing in elucidation of the mystery. The windows were hermetically shut, and sealed with cobwebs. There was no furniture, except in the end room, where a wardrobe without doors stood in a corner, empty save for the solemn presence of a monstrous tall hat. I went back to bed, cursing those powers of darkness that had got me out of it, and heard no more.

My landlord had not failed of his promise to visit my coverts with his hounds; in fact, he fulfilled it rather more conscientiously than seemed to me quite wholesome for the cock-shooting. I maintained a silence which I felt to be magnanimous on the part of a man who cared nothing for hunting and a great deal for shooting, and wished the hounds more success in the slaughter of my foxes than seemed to be granted to them. I met them all, one red frosty evening, as I drove down the long hill to my demesne gates, Flurry at their head, in his shabby pink coat and dingy breeches, the hounds trailing dejectedly behind him and his half-dozen companions.

MY FRIEND SLIPPER

'What luck?' I called out, drawing rein as I met them.

'None,' said Mr. Flurry briefly. He did not stop, neither did he remove his pipe from the down-twisted corner of his mouth; his eye at me was cold and sour. The other members of the hunt passed me with equal hauteur; I thought they took their ill luck very badly.

On foot, among the last of the straggling hounds, cracking a carman's whip, and swearing comprehensively at them all, slouched my friend Slipper. Our friendship had begun in Court, the relative positions of the dock and the judgment seat forming no obstacle to its progress, and had been cemented during several days' tramping after snipe. He was, as usual, a little drunk, and he hailed me as though I were a ship.

'Ahoy, Major Yeates!' he shouted, bringing himself up with a lurch against my cart; 'it's hunting ye should be, in place of sending poor divils to gaol!'

'But I hear you had no hunting,' I said.

'Ye heard that, did ye?' Slipper rolled upon me an eye like that of a profligate pug. 'Well, begor, ye heard no more than the thruth.'

'But where are all the foxes?' said I.

'Begor, I don't know no more than your honour. And Shreelane—that there used to be as many foxes in it as there's crosses in a yard of check! Well, well, I'll say nothin' for it, only that it's quare! Here, Vaynus! Naygress!' Slipper uttered a yell, hoarse with whisky, in adjuration of two elderly ladies of the pack who had profited by our conversation to stray away into an adjacent cottage. 'Well, good-night, Major. Mr. Flurry's as cross as briars, and he'll have me ate!'

He set off at a surprisingly steady run, cracking his whip, and whooping like a madman. I hope that when I also am sixty I shall be able to run like Slipper.

That frosty evening was followed by three others like unto it, and a flight of woodcock came in. I calculated that I could do with five guns, and I despatched invitations to shoot and dine on the following day to four of the local sportsmen, among whom was, of course, my landlord. I remember that in my letter to the latter I expressed a facetious hope that my bag of cock would be more successful than his of foxes had been.

The answers to my invitations were not what I expected. All, without so much as a conventional regret, declined my invitation; Mr. Knox added that he hoped the bag of cock would be to my liking, and that I need not be 'affraid' that the hounds would trouble my coverts any more. Here was war! I gazed in stupefaction at the crooked scrawl in which my landlord had declared it. It was wholly and entirely inexplicable, and instead of going to sleep comfortably over the fire and my newspaper as a gentleman should, I spent the evening in irritated ponderings over this bewildering and exasperating change of front on the part of my friendly squireens.

My shoot the next day was scarcely a success. I shot the woods in company with my gamekeeper, Tim Connor, a gentleman whose duties mainly consisted in limiting the poaching privileges to his personal friends, and whatever my offence might have been, Mr. Knox could have wished me no bitterer punishment than hearing the unavailing shouts of 'Mark Cock!' and seeing my birds winging their way from the coverts, far out of shot. Tim Connor and I got ten couple between us; it might have been thirty if my neighbours had not boycotted

me, for what I could only suppose was the slackness of their hounds.

I was dog-tired that night, having walked enough for three men, and I slept the deep, insatiable sleep that I had earned. It was somewhere about 3 A.M. that I was gradually awakened by a continuous knocking, interspersed with muffled calls. Great-Uncle McCarthy had never before given tongue, and I freed one ear from blankets to listen. Then I remembered that Peter had told me the sweep had promised to arrive that morning, and to arrive early. Blind with sleep and fury I went to the passage window, and thence desired the sweep to go to the devil. It availed me little. For the remainder of the night I could hear him pacing round the house, trying the windows, banging at the doors, and calling upon Peter Cadogan as the priests of Baal called upon their god. At 6 o'clock I had fallen into a troubled doze, when Mrs. Cadogan knocked at my door and imparted the information that the sweep had arrived. My answer need not be recorded, but in spite of it the door opened, and my housekeeper, in a weird *déshabille*, effectively lighted by the orange beams of her candle, entered my room.

'God forgive me, I never seen one I'd hate as much as that sweep!' she began; 'he's these three hours—arrah, what, three hours!—no, but all night, raising tallywack and tandem round the house to get at the chimbleys.'

'Well, for heaven's sake let him get at the chimneys and let me go to sleep,' I answered, goaded to desperation, 'and you may tell him from me that if I hear his voice again I'll shoot him!'

Mrs. Cadogan silently left my bedside, and as she closed the door she said to herself, 'The Lord save us!'

Subsequent events may be briefly summarised. At 7.30 I was wakened anew by a thunderous sound in the chimney, and a brick crashed into the fireplace, followed at a short interval by two dead jackdaws and their nests. At 8, I was informed by Peter that there was no hot water, and that he wished the divil would roast the same sweep. At 9.30, when I came down to breakfast, there was no fire anywhere, and my coffee, made in the coach-house, tasted of soot. I put on an overcoat and opened my letters. About fourth or fifth in the uninteresting heap came one in an egregiously disguised hand.

'Sir,' it began, 'this is to inform you your unsportsmanlike conduct has been discovered. You have been suspected this good while of shooting the Shreelane foxes, it is known now you

do worse. Parties have seen your gamekeeper going regular to meet the Saturday early train at Salters Hill Station, with your grey horse under a cart, and your labels on the boxes, and we know as well as *your agent in Cork* what it is you have in those boxes. Be warned in time.—Your Wellwisher.'

I read this through twice before its drift became apparent, and I realised that I was accused of improving my shooting and my finances by the simple expedient of selling my foxes. That is to say, I was in a worse position than if I had stolen a horse, or murdered Mrs. Cadogan, or got drunk three times a week in Skebawn.

For a few moments I fell into wild laughter, and then, aware that it was rather a bad business to let a lie of this kind get a start, I sat down to demolish the preposterous charge in a letter to Flurry Knox. Somehow, as I selected my sentences, it was borne in upon me that, if the letter spoke the truth, circumstantial evidence was rather against me. Mere lofty repudiation would be unavailing, and by my infernal facetiousness about the woodcock I had effectively filled in the case against myself. At all events, the first thing to do was to establish a basis, and have it out with Tim Connor. I rang the bell.

'Peter, is Tim Connor about the place?'

'He is not, sir. I heard him say he was going west the hill to mend the bounds fence.' Peter's face was covered with soot, his eyes were red, and he coughed ostentatiously. 'The sweep's after breaking one of his brushes within in yer bedroom chimney, sir,' he went on, with all the satisfaction of his class in announcing domestic calamity; 'he's above on the roof now, and he'd be thankful to you to go up to him.'

I followed him upstairs in that state of simmering patience that any employer of Irish labour must know and sympathise with. I climbed the rickety ladder and squeezed through the dirty trapdoor involved in the ascent to the roof, and was confronted by the hideous face of the sweep, black against the frosty blue sky. He had encamped with all his paraphernalia on the flat top of the roof, and was good enough to rise and put his pipe in his pocket on my arrival.

'Good morning, Major. That's a grand view you have up here,' said the sweep. He was evidently far too well-bred to talk shop. 'I thravelled every roof in this counthry, and there isn't one where you'd get as handsome a prospect!'

Theoretically he was right, but I had not come up to the roof to discuss scenery, and demanded brutally why he had sent for

me. The explanation involved a recital of the special genius required to sweep the Shreelane chimneys; of the fact that the sweep had in infancy been sent up and down every one of them by Great-Uncle McCarthy; of the three ass-loads of soot that by his peculiar skill he had this morning taken from the kitchen chimney; of its present purity, the draught being such that it would 'dhraw up a young cat with it.' Finally—realising that I could endure no more—he explained that my bedroom chimney had got what he called 'a wynd' in it, and he proposed to climb down a little way in the stack to try 'would he get to come at the brush.' The sweep was very small, the chimney very large. I stipulated that he should have a rope round his waist, and despite the illegality, I let him go. He went down like a monkey, digging his toes and fingers into the niches made for the purpose in the old chimney; Peter held the rope. I lit a cigarette and waited.

Certainly the view from the roof was worth coming up to look at. It was rough, heathery country on one side, with a string of little blue lakes running like a turquoise necklet round the base of a firry hill, and patches of pale green pasture were set amidst the rocks and heather. A silvery flash behind the undulations of the hills told where the Atlantic lay in immense plains of sunlight. I turned to survey with an owner's eye my own grey woods and straggling plantations of larch, and espied a man coming out of the western wood. He had something on his back, and he was walking very fast; a rabbit poacher no doubt. As he passed out of sight into the back avenue I saw he was beginning to run. At the same instant I saw on the hill beyond my western boundaries half a dozen horsemen scrambling by zigzag ways down towards the wood. There was one red coat among them; it came first at the gap in the fence that Tim Connor had gone out to mend, and with the others was lost to sight in the covert, from which, in another instant, came clearly through the frosty air a shout of 'Gone to ground!' Tremendous horn blowings followed, then, all in the same moment, I saw the hounds break in full cry from the wood, and come stringing over the grass and up the back avenue towards the yard gate. Were they running a fresh fox into the stables?

I do not profess to be a hunting-man, but I am an Irishman, and so, it is perhaps superfluous to state, is Peter. We forgot the sweep as if he had never existed, and precipitated ourselves down the ladder, down the stairs, and out into the yard. One side of the yard is formed by the coach-house and a long stable, with a range of lofts above them, planned on the heroic

scale in such matters that obtained in Ireland formerly. These join the house at the corner by the back door. A long flight of stone steps leads to the lofts, and up these, as Peter and I emerged from the back door, the hounds were struggling helter-skelter. Almost simultaneously there was a confused clatter of hoofs in the back avenue, and Flurry Knox came stooping at a gallop under the archway followed by three or four other riders. They flung themselves from their horses and made for the steps of the loft; more hounds pressed, yelling, on their heels, the din was indescribable, and justified Mrs. Cadogan's subsequent remark that 'when she heard the noise she thought the divil and all his young ones was broke loose.'

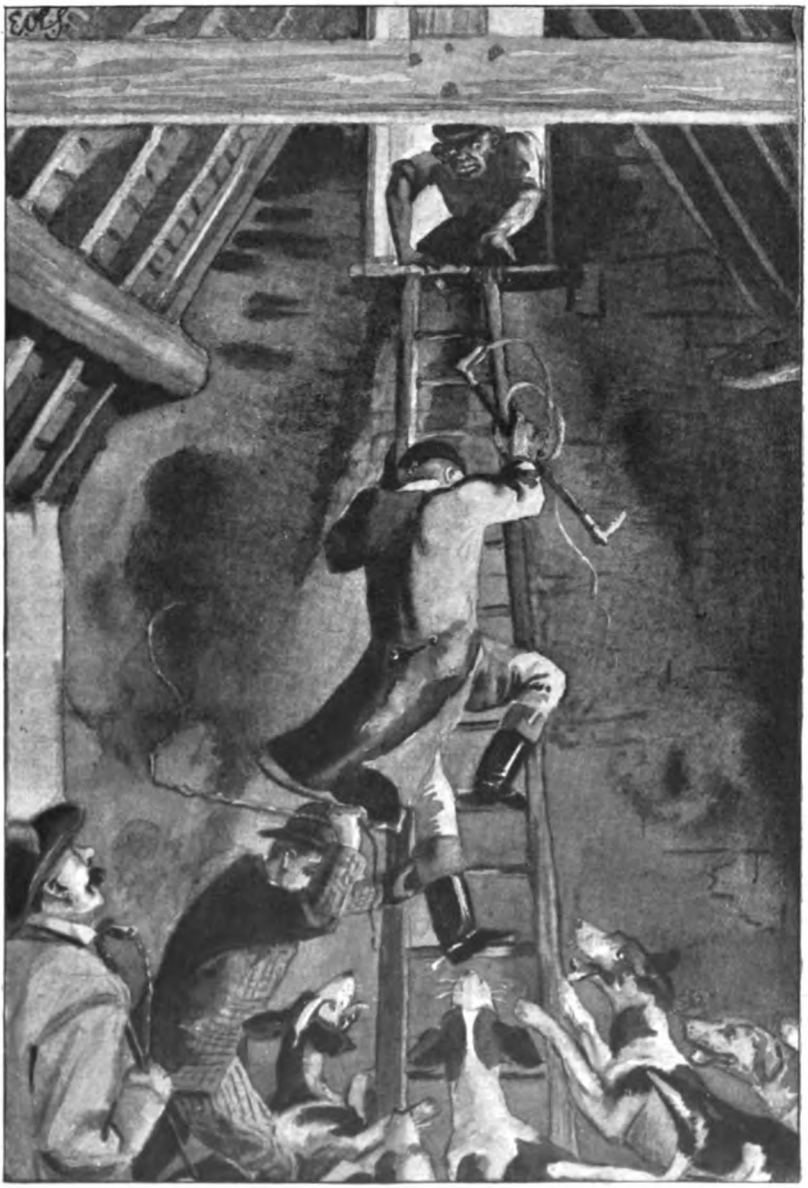
I jostled in the wake of the party, and found myself in the loft, wading in hay, and nearly deafened by the clamour that was bandied about the high roof and walls. At the further end of the loft the hounds were raging in the hay, encouraged thereto by the whoops and screeches of Flurry and his friends. High up in the gable of the loft, where it joined the main wall of the house, there was a small door, and I noted with a transient surprise that there was a long ladder leading up to it. Even as it caught my eye a hound fought his way out of a drift of hay and began to jump at the ladder, throwing his tongue vociferously, and even clambering up a few rungs in his excitement.

'There's the way he's gone!' roared Flurry, striving through hounds and hay towards the ladder, 'Trumpeter has him! What's up there, back of the door, Major? I don't remember it at all.'

My crimes had evidently been forgotten in the supremacy of the moment. While I was futilely asserting that had the fox gone up the ladder he could not possibly have opened the door and shut it after him, even if the door led anywhere, which, to the best of my belief, it did not, the door in question opened, and to my amazement the sweep appeared at it. He gesticulated violently, and over the tumult was heard to asseverate that there was nothing above there, only a way into the flue, and anyone would be destroyed with the soot——

'Ah, go to blazes with your soot!' interrupted Flurry, already half-way up the ladder.

I followed him, the other men pressing up behind me. That Trumpeter had made no mistake was instantly brought home to our noses by the reek of fox that met us at the door. Instead of a chimney, we found ourselves in a dilapidated bedroom, full of people. Tim Connor was there, the sweep was there, and a



THE SWEEP WAS HEARD TO ASSEVERATE THERE WAS NOTHING ABOVE THERE, ONLY A WAY INTO THE FLUE

squalid elderly man and woman on whom I had never set eyes before. There was a large open fireplace, black with the soot the sweep had brought down with him, and on the table stood a bottle of my own special Scotch whisky. In one corner of the room was a pile of broken packing cases, and beside these on the floor lay a bag in which something kicked.

Flurry, looking more uncomfortable and nonplussed than I could have believed possible, listened in silence to the ceaseless harangue of the elderly woman. The hounds were yelling like lost spirits in the loft below, but her voice pierced the uproar like a bagpipe. It was an unspeakably vulgar voice, yet it was not the voice of a countrywoman, and there were frowzy remnants of respectability about her general aspect.

'And is it you, Flurry Knox, that's calling me a disgrace! Disgrace, indeed, am I? Me that was your poor mother's own uncle's daughter, and as good a McCarthy as ever stood in Shreelane!'

What followed I could not comprehend, owing to the fact that the sweep kept up a perpetual under-current of explanation to me as to how he had got down the wrong chimney. I noticed that his breath stank of whisky—Scotch, not the native variety.

. . . . . .

Never, as long as Flurry Knox lives to blow a horn, will he hear the last of the day that he ran his mother's first cousin to ground in the attic. Never, while Mrs. Cadogan can hold a basting spoon, will she cease to recount how, on the same occasion, she plucked and roasted ten couple of woodcock in one torrid hour to provide luncheon for the hunt. In the glory of this achievement her confederacy with the stowaways in the attic is wholly slurred over, in much the same manner as the startling outburst of summons for trespass, brought by Tim Connor during the remainder of the shooting season, obscured the unfortunate episode of the bagged fox. It was, of course, zeal for my shooting that induced him to assist Mr. Knox's disreputable relations in the deportation of my foxes; and I have allowed it to remain at that.

In fact, the only things not allowed to remain were Mr. and Mrs. McCarthy Gannon. They, as my landlord informed me, in the midst of vast apologies, had been permitted to squat at Shreelane until my tenancy began, and having then ostentatiously and abusively left the house, they had, with the connivance of the Cadogans, secretly returned to roost in the corner attic, to sell foxes under the ægis of my name, and to make inroads on my

belongings. They retained connection with the outer world by means of the ladder and the loft, and with the house in general, and my whisky in particular, by a door into the other attics—a door concealed by the wardrobe in which reposed Great-Uncle McCarthy's tall hat.

It is with the greatest regret that I relinquish the prospect of writing a monograph on Great-Uncle McCarthy for a Spiritualistic Journal, but with the departure of his relations he ceased to manifest himself, and neither the nailing up of packing cases, nor the rumble of the cart that took them to the station, disturbed my sleep for the future.

I understand that the task of clearing out the McCarthy Gannon's effects was of a nature that necessitated two glasses of whisky per man; and if the remnants of rabbit and jackdaw disinterred in the process were anything like the crow that was thrown out of the window at my feet, I do not grudge the restorative.

As Mrs. Cadogan remarked to the sweep, 'A Turk couldn't stand it.'

SPORT IN NEW SOUTH WALES

BY LORD HAMPDEN, GOVERNOR OF NEW SOUTH WALES

THE difficulty of writing on sport in New South Wales is that the article itself is so hard to find. To have good sport, hunting or shooting, you must have a certain amount of preservation. Now, Australia is a democratic country where the preservation of game, or of wild animals, as it is understood in England, would not be tolerated. A few birds are protected by law, such as the laughing jackass and the lyre bird, and there is a general close time for swans, ducks, and quail. In the season, however, anyone can shoot without fear of trespass, and the consequence is that within reach of population a solitude has been effected so far as regards the animal kingdom. I walked for many hours through the bush on the shores of Lake Macquarie, which is within easy reach of Newcastle, and I never heard the note of a single bird, parrot or other, nor did I notice the track of any living animal. It is quite safe to predict that if no law is passed for the better preservation of birds and animals, more particularly of the turkey bustard, the kangaroo, and emu, there will be a clean sweep of them in New South Wales as settlement progresses. Of sport, in a wide sense, there is plenty and to spare. The Australians are passionately attached to horse-racing, they have quite recently shown us their superiority in the cricket-field, and their skill and courage in the saddle are world-known.

Horse-racing is well managed by the Australians, and the skill of Australian cricketers is a matter of universal knowledge. The last contests between England and Australia created an extraordinary amount of popular interest.

Unfortunately, the play of Mr. Stoddart's English eleven was not at all equal to their reputation. On paper the eleven was equal to any team which the Australians could produce, yet, with the exception of the first test match, the Englishmen were heavily beaten. In all probability several causes contributed to this result. The summer in Adelaide and Melbourne was abnormally severe, and must have been intensely trying to men new to the climate, several of their best players being from time to time indisposed. The latter misfortune, however, is one which is sure to trouble the management of every visiting team, and provision against it can only be made by increasing the number of the players engaged. But whatever may be the arrangements made, the home team must always have an immense advantage in being able to draw their players from the whole body of cricketers available for first-class matches. As against Mr. Stoddart's eleven, this was exemplified by the success which followed the decision of the Australians to play Noble and Howell instead of two players who had not been very successful in the first test match.

Whatever may have been the disadvantages suffered by the Englishmen, they were really incidental to the conditions of the venture which they undertook, and the fact remains that, splendid as some of their individual play was, they were beaten by the superior all-round skill of the Australian team.

The one and only regrettable incident in these matches was the attack made by one of the English professionals on the umpire Bannerman. The appointment of Bannerman was suggested by the English captain himself, who expressed the opinion that Bannerman was fully qualified to act as umpire, and that his decisions would command the respect of the English eleven.

Apart, however, from any consideration arising out of the action thus taken by the English captain, the umpire's decisions should be publicly respected, or the game will have to be discontinued. The umpire's position in the football arena has long been one of discomfort, and even of danger, but I had hoped that this would never be the case in cricket. The question is not whether Bannerman was a good umpire or whether his decision was a wise one. It is whether, being the umpire, it was

legitimate or decent to call his decisions in question. The Australian cricketing world is looking anxiously to the action of the Marylebone Club, hoping that they will vindicate the honour and credit of English cricketers in this unfortunate matter.

As I have already intimated, fishing and shooting sport is hard to get in New South Wales. Of salmon and trout fly-fishing there is none, though I have been told that there are trout in the Snowy River of a fair weight.

One needs to know his book, so to speak, to get good fishing in New South Wales waters; but, knowing it, then there is good sport for the expert angler. Salmon and trout are not yet acclimatised to the inland waters, but efforts are continuously made to stock them, and probably within a few years there will be abundant results. The western rivers (*i.e.* rivers flowing into the great Murray system) are well supplied with Murray cod, silver perch, golden perch, jew-fish, and fresh-water bream; and as all these varieties take bait freely, there is good fishing in their favourite haunts. Unfortunately, however, netting and pollution of the streams result in the depletion of the waters of the rivers close to settlements.

Excellent sport, nevertheless, is to be got on the Tumut River, near to its junction with the Murrumbidgee, on the Namoi, and on many other tributaries of the Murray or the Darling, when the streams are not subject to repeated takings by the net fisherman

The state of the river regulates the fishing, as freshets of floods bring down a muddy stream which is fatal to sport. The requisites for success are fairly warm weather, a clear stream, and a good supply of bait, such as earthworms, shrimps, crickets, or wood-borer grubs. It is no unusual thing for an angler to bring home, under favourable conditions, a take of from two to three dozen perch and cod of an average weight of 2 lb. each for a day's fishing.

In the eastern rivers which flow into the Pacific, such as the Hunter and the Hawkesbury, there abounds a perch which may be fished for with either a fly or a sunken bait. On the Paterson and Williams rivers, the settlers frequently spend an afternoon in the summer rod-fishing in some quiet pools, and their endeavours are generally amply rewarded both in quantity and quality of fish.

But sea-fishing is the more familiar pastime of the Australian sportsman. Whether it be from the convenient situation of Sydney to so many estuaries of the sea, or some other cause, it is a fact that there are more amateur fishermen in and around

Sydney than in any other of the Australian capitals. They have an association which is well organised with monthly meetings, whereat lectures and exhibitions pertinent to their hobby are given. And once or twice a month, on Saturday afternoons, the members rendezvous on some favourite ground and enter into friendly contests for trophies presented by patrons of the sport.

The schnapper is, of course, the king of Australian fish, and the schnapper grounds off Sydney Heads, Botany, Broken Bay, and Bird Island, are regularly visited during the season by enthusiasts, who, in open boats or in steamers, fish with hand lines for the 'school schnapper,' which average from 5 lb. to 8 lb. each. But the sport is not varied enough for one looking beyond the pot. True it is that if sharks come about, as they frequently do, then it is a break in the monotony of pulling up schnapper, to pull up schnappers' heads instead. The sharks bite the body from the shoulders down, as cleanly as if cut with a knife.

Shark fishing is another favourite sport with a section of the fishermen. It is full of excitement and not without danger. The best sport is with the 'blue pointer,' which runs to a length of from twelve to fifteen feet when full grown. There is satisfaction in the catching of such a fish when one realises that a full-grown 'pointer,' educated by habit to the ways of Sydney harbour and its frequenters, is a dangerous nuisance, and may at any time attack bathers or frail craft.

The blue-pointer will give good sport, provided he is well grown; he will fight until he is drowned by careful playing, or disabled by a lance thrust. At times these fish will charge the boat, and it then becomes necessary to use the lance.

But the best sport for the expert angler is black bream fishing. To be an expert bream fisherman requires practice and judgment, and it is no uncommon thing to find in a boat one or two men hauling in freely while the remainder of the party may not catch even one fish. The black bream is a school fish, whose habits are to visit the rivers and estuaries during the late autumn and early spring, for in the summer months they seem to prefer the ocean. It is no use trying to hook the 'darkey,' as he is called, with heavy tackle and common bait. The finest of fine lines, a light sinker, and a length of good gut are essentials; with prawns for bait, and a sensitive hand to work the line or the rod, the requisites are complete.

The eddies along the points of Paramatta River, of George's River, and of Port Hacking, are the favourite grounds, and great

catches are at times recorded from these parts. But the best ground of all is at Jibbon, the south head of Port Hacking, in January and February of the year. With calm weather and a fairly light night, when there is no phosphorescence in the water, the little reach at Jibbon will be lined with skiffs, each moored 'stem and stern' along the shore line, about four or five fathoms out from the rocks, and each boat will be occupied by its two or three enthusiastic bream fishers, who will be busy until they tire of the sport. Ten to fifteen dozen of bream from 1 lb. to 2 lb. each is not out of the way as a catch for a successful party of two or three men.

FISHING WITH HAND LINES FOR 'SCHNAPPER'

As a general rule visitors to New South Wales are misled into condemning the fishing by want of proper guidance in their pursuit of the sport.

Three set rules are worth observing: *first*, never to fish in the middle of the day, say from 10 A.M. to 3 P.M.; *second*, never to fish in southerly weather; *third*, an hour on the last of one tide and on the first of another is worth three hours of a full running tide.

Visitors to New South Wales in the autumn and early summer months may be sure of good sport and good scenery at the National Park, Port Hacking, or at Woy Woy, on the Northern Railway line, either place being within an hour and a half rail from Sydney.

In good seasons there is splendid duck shooting to be obtained in New South Wales, the only drawback to the sport being the necessity of pursuing it in the summer weather, when the heat of the day is oppressive, and when the mosquito and sandfly are apt to make themselves unpleasantly inconvenient. My own experience of duck shooting was confined to an expedition in the winter weather to the district of the Macquarie River, between Dubbo and Nyngan. Every preparation had been made to enable our party to reach a camp which had been formed on the Macquarie, where we should have had plenty of duck, but, unfortunately, the rain came down the night we travelled by train from Sydney, and when we arrived at Mullengudgery station, the country, the soil of which is black, and the substance heavy, had become so yielding that locomotion was rendered difficult. The neighbourhood here is not sufficiently settled to allow of roads. We travelled in buggies across the bush, the wheels sinking into the yielding black soil, so that by night we had gone twenty-five miles instead of the required forty miles, and we had to unharness and get a shake-down for the night in a shearer's hut, fifteen miles short of our destination.

It will always be a matter for surprise to me how, under these conditions, our host was able to do as much as he did for our comfort. We lit a fire in the hut, but as we had with us no bedding it can be readily believed that our night at that shearer's hut was the reverse of comfortable. However, time being short, we decided to remain where we were, and by the middle of the next day we had obtained from the camp on the Macquarie all that we wanted for our comfort. The decision was necessary, but unfortunate, for if we had pushed on to the Macquarie we should have obtained better sport, the duck being mostly up in that district.

There is a charming freedom and uncertainty about bush travelling. My host met me at the station with a four-horse buggy, and the way we bumped and bounced over ruts and logs, skirted trees and negotiated creeks, was a revelation of what can be done if the driver is skilful and the carriage light but strong. Sometimes emulation enters into the spirit of the drivers, and the situation becomes, to say the least of it, exciting to those who have to sit still and look on. On one of these occasions, my friend, who was leading, avoided a creek as too dangerous, but the next man took the risk, and getting safely to the other side gained a mile upon us. 'Ah!' lamented my friend, 'Mar has got the bulge on us!' This was incomprehensible to my under-

A DRIVE OF KANGAROO AND EMU

standing, but on inquiry I learnt that the word 'bulge' was short Australian for 'advantage.' How true is the old saying that one lives and learns!

The first day's occupation consisted of a drive of kangaroo and emu. There were crowds of them, but in the shooting of these animals there is no sport. The kangaroo is not difficult to approach, and is of a timid and inoffensive disposition. I sincerly trust that measures will be taken to preserve kangaroos and emus in limited numbers, both of these animals being worth keeping as characteristic of the country.

The wild turkey were fairly numerous in this district. Like the kangaroo and the emu, they retreat with the advance of civilised settlement. In these parts, however, they have still a free and happy home. The paddocks, so-called, are more provinces than what we in England understand by the word paddock. A small one is eight thousand acres, and they range up to thirty thousand acres. So it may be imagined that there is room for the wild turkey and emu, and that one may roam some miles before one sees the quarry which is sought. The best way of approaching the turkey is to drive round and round in a buggy, gradually narrowing the circle, and in this way one may often get within fifty or sixty yards, when a charge of No. 1 should secure the bird. These turkeys are good eating.

Two of my friends who were of the party, being young and full of ardour, engaged in some adventurous sport all to themselves. Driving across a paddock they espied a wild boar, and nothing would satisfy them but a run after this animal, pegging into him with small shot whenever they were near enough and had breath to shoot. I am afraid there was something of the ridiculous in the proceeding, and yet there was a decided element of danger in it; for the wild boar, though not indigenous, being a descendant of the domestic pig who escaped into the freedom of the bush, is a savage animal enough. I saw only the beginning of the chase, but I was informed that they succeeded eventually in bagging the pig.

A capital day with duck followed our turkey stalk. Five of us started in the morning for a lagoon which was flanked by gum and willow trees. About an hour's shooting at wild-duck, which flew at considerable height from one end of the lagoon to the other, circling round for some miles and again returning to the water, resulted in a kill of seventy of various sorts. The sport was good and the shooting difficult, not merely owing to the flight of the birds, but also to the necessity of hiding and

shooting from under the shelter of the trees. My birds all fell, unfortunately, into the lagoon, and, having no retriever, the prospect of securing them appeared remote, when one of my hosts, an Australian squatter, of some sixty years and of a gigantic build, quietly divested himself of his clothing, and plunging into the lagoon swam for a quarter of an hour, retrieving all my ducks. I admired the action, though I did not attempt to follow the lead. It was quite typical of the Australian bush, and I have deeply regretted that I was on that occasion without my Kodak.

One of the best day's sport I had in New South Wales was with Mr. Patrick Osborne, at his station Carrundooley, about forty miles from Goulburn, on Lake St. George. The season was one of severe drought, causing heavy losses in cattle and sheep, and it can therefore be well imagined that the same cause operated to thin the ranks of the hares in the district. Nevertheless, we had a good day's hare driving, bagging one hundred and fifty. The whole neighbourhood turned out on horse or on foot, driving the game in over miles of country. The guns were placed behind trees in the bush, and my horse being unused to firearms, the greatest excitement I had during the day was the anxiety I felt at every drive lest the animal should escape from his tether, and leave me to make my way home on foot.

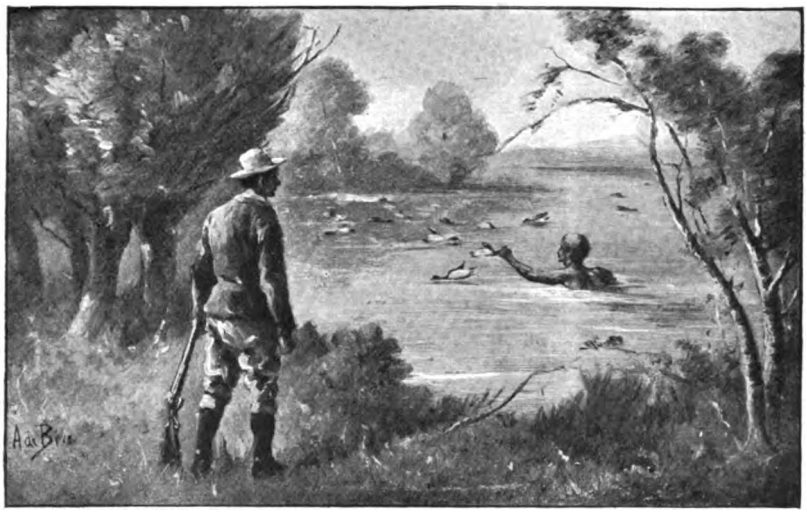
In the summer weather, when there has been a sufficiency of rain, there is good snipe shooting to be had in many parts of New South Wales; but the sport has to be good to compensate for the labour and fatigue of a day's sport under an Australian summer sun.

On these shooting expeditions the midday meal is an important matter. A billy for tea and a good bush fire are the first requisites, and when these have been provided near a good shelter from the sun, the lunch and siesta can be enjoyed in a temperature typical of the Australian bush in winter, and thoroughly delightful to the senses.

There is, perhaps, nothing more agreeable in the way of sport in Australia than a day after quail with setters or pointers in the winter weather. A dry, crisp air, a bright sun, and grass paddocks for the ground, render the exercise pleasant; and when the quail are numerous you get a variety of quick shooting. What gives the quail a chance they would not have in the open is that in most of the ground there are remains of the original bush, in the shape of decaying ring-barked trees, skeletons of the

old forest. The quail in his rapid flight is, soon after rising, protected by these trunks, and it takes a quick eye and some practice to get the shot in with good effect.

I have had one or two very fair days with Mr. Alexander Hay at Coolangatta on the Shoalhaven—a fine station which has been reclaimed from swamp, and converted to a fine dairying district by a simple system of drainage by gravitation, carried out by Dr. Hay, the owner, under the advice of Mr. Wright, an engineer. The ground is in many parts excellent for quail shooting. I believe that Mr. Alex. Hay has spent a considerable sum in the endeavour to introduce partridges into the district, but I am



RETRIEVING ALL MY DUCKS

afraid the venture has not been successful. Even in the settled parts of Australia the partridge has too many natural enemies with whom to contend.

In quite another district of New South Wales, that of New England, three thousand feet above the sea, I have also had some fine quail shooting; but it is evidence of the immense area of this colony, and of the diversity of climate to be met with therein, that while shooting at Coolangatta I found the middle of the day trying, owing to the heat of the sun. There was snow in New England at the same time of the year, and I contrived with great difficulty to keep my fingers warm enough to feel the trigger.

One hears of snakes in Australia, but they are seldom seen. The district of the Shoalhaven is fairly productive of snakes, but during four days' shooting I never saw one. In shooting through long grass in the summer, however, it is well to wear boots up to the knee. I have only seen five snakes alive in the three years I have resided in the country, and I saw three of these on one day when golfing near Moss Vale.

The other two I met when riding one afternoon in the same district. I was going on ahead, and my horse shied violently at something which I did not perceive; my friend, who was riding twenty lengths behind me, cantered right upon the top of a brown snake. For the space of half a second the creature was seen wound round the pony's leg. On dismounting I could see no trace of snake bite, and the pony fortunately escaped scatheless.

There is no hunting in New South Wales with dogs, though the hare, the kangaroo, and the emu are coursed. I had two or three days of this sport in the Riverina, and from my experience I came to the conclusion that it was a very poor game to course the kangaroo with dogs. If they have any speed they run the kangaroo down in a very short distance. To ride the kangaroo or the emu down without dogs affords a good gallop of five or six miles, and given high, stiff fencing, the quarry may distance his pursuers; though it is extraordinary how often the kangaroo will jump along a fence instead of to safety over it. The paddocks, however, are so large that the kangaroo may often fail to reach the boundary fence in time to save his life. I confess that when I was out my sympathies were entirely with the kangaroo. Another form of sport to those who care for riding, and are good horsemen, is that of yarding wild horses.

The wild horses or brumbies of Australia are not indigenous; they are the descendants of horses that have escaped from the settlers, and they have increased largely in numbers in some districts. With these animals degeneration sets in rapidly, a wild horse within two or three generations becoming quite useless for any purpose of man. Owing to in-breeding, and to their hard life, they become weedy, bad-shouldered, and ewe-necked. When run in they buck viciously, and are very violent; but as soon as they are broken their courage leaves them entirely.

Good sport is afforded in yarding a mob of these animals, a course which is often rendered necessary when a good horse has escaped from a station, and joined their ranks. Mares frequently escape, and join the mob of a wild stallion.

RIDING AFTER THESE ANIMALS OVER THE RUGGED COUNTRY IS A DANGEROUS SPORT

The favourite method for capturing mobs of the wild horse is to build 'trap yards' in gullies, the yards having wings of fence extending into the bush on either side of a gully, or of any other natural passage of the wild horse. The best horsemen on the station on their fastest horses go out, and, by dint of hard riding, drive the mob into the wings of the yard. Another method is to take out a mob of quiet horses, commonly known as 'tailers,' and leave them feeding near the haunts of the wild ones, who, after a long chase, get driven in among the tailers, and being tired, stay with them, and are driven into the stockyards.

The riding after these animals over the rugged and broken country which they frequent is a dangerous sport, as they go at a great pace. The hills are steep, rocks and stumps abound, fallen trees and deep gullies are hidden by treacherous scrub, which is often so thick that only a very clever horse, and one thoroughly trained to the work, can steer his way through safely at top speed. Falls are frequent, and as the chase is often prolonged for hours, the tax on the endurance of horse and rider is very severe.

The strain on the stock horses is so great that, unless it is necessary to yard a mob to recover some valuable strayed animal, the station owner generally prefers to shoot the wild horses. The progress made in fencing the various runs has also rendered the destruction of wild horses easier, and they are now mainly restricted to countries so rugged and broken that, except in a few places, they cannot be pursued on horseback.

On some stations, situated in rough country, where many horses are bred, mobs neglected for any length of time become as hard to dislodge from their fastnesses as the horse who has never known an owner. They will run from hill to hill, and from gully to gully, in their own tract of country, defying the efforts of the most experienced riders to yard them.

On December 7, 1897, Captain Sloane Stanley, 12th Lancers, Mr. A. B. Paterson, and Mr. Davison, the manager of the Burderini station, had a ride after a mob of young horses which had been running wild in the bush for some years. The country consisted of steep hills and gullies, thickly timbered in parts, the ground being a regular network of fallen timber and stones. Their object in going out was to yard two horses which were known to have been running for some time with the others in the ranges near the river. After a long ride, they came across the horses. They were headed for the station, and after three or four miles' galloping they outpaced their pursuers and

wheeled back. At this point a fresh horseman took up the chase, and to such good purpose, that one of the horses bolted through a wire fence and escaped, while the other was brought down to the yard in company with a tailer.

My recollections of sport extend no further. As will have been observed, I certainly obtained some; but New South Wales cannot be called a sporting country. If a man were on sport intent, I should not advise him to come to New South Wales; but if he were only on pleasure bent, he could not do better than pay the country a visit. The weather, for seven months in the year, is delicious. There is within its area a variety of pleasant climate to be obtained, and the people of the country are hospitable. He will find here all the interest which attaches to a new country and to democratic institutions. There are, unfortunately, no ancient and stately monuments, but the history of the country, short as it is, is full of interest, and eloquent of the skill and energy of the people. The progress made since Captain Philip sailed into Port Jackson is truly marvellous, and he would indeed be a bold man who would set a limit to the trade and shipping of New South Wales, seeing that in the short space of seventy years the shipping of the Port of Sydney has sprung from twenty thousand to three millions of tons.

OUR SAILORS AT PLAY

BY LIEUTENANT STUART D. GORDON, R.N.

I.—FISHING

'How do you manage to amuse yourselves on board a man-of-war?' So often has the writer been asked this question, that he has thought—by way of answer to the query—some little account of the different fashions our pleasures take in the Royal Navy might be of interest to the readers of this Magazine.

The very making of such an inquiry would suggest, among other things, the landsman's idea to be that the naval man has little to do, finding therefore a correspondingly great trouble in killing his spare time. In fact, it was not so many years ago that one heard, as the common objection alleged against the sailor's calling, 'It is such an idle life.' The constitution of Her Majesty's Service has never, unfortunately, permitted the 'gentlemen of England who sit at home at ease' to make practical experiment of the truth of this allegation, otherwise there would have been a very different tale to tell.

But happily of late years public opinion has undergone a change in this respect, attributable in a large measure to the more universal interest displayed in all matters connected with

the Service. Now that the nation is alive to the fact that without a navy our Empire would cease to be, such ideas, founded upon ignorant tradition, can no longer claim credence.

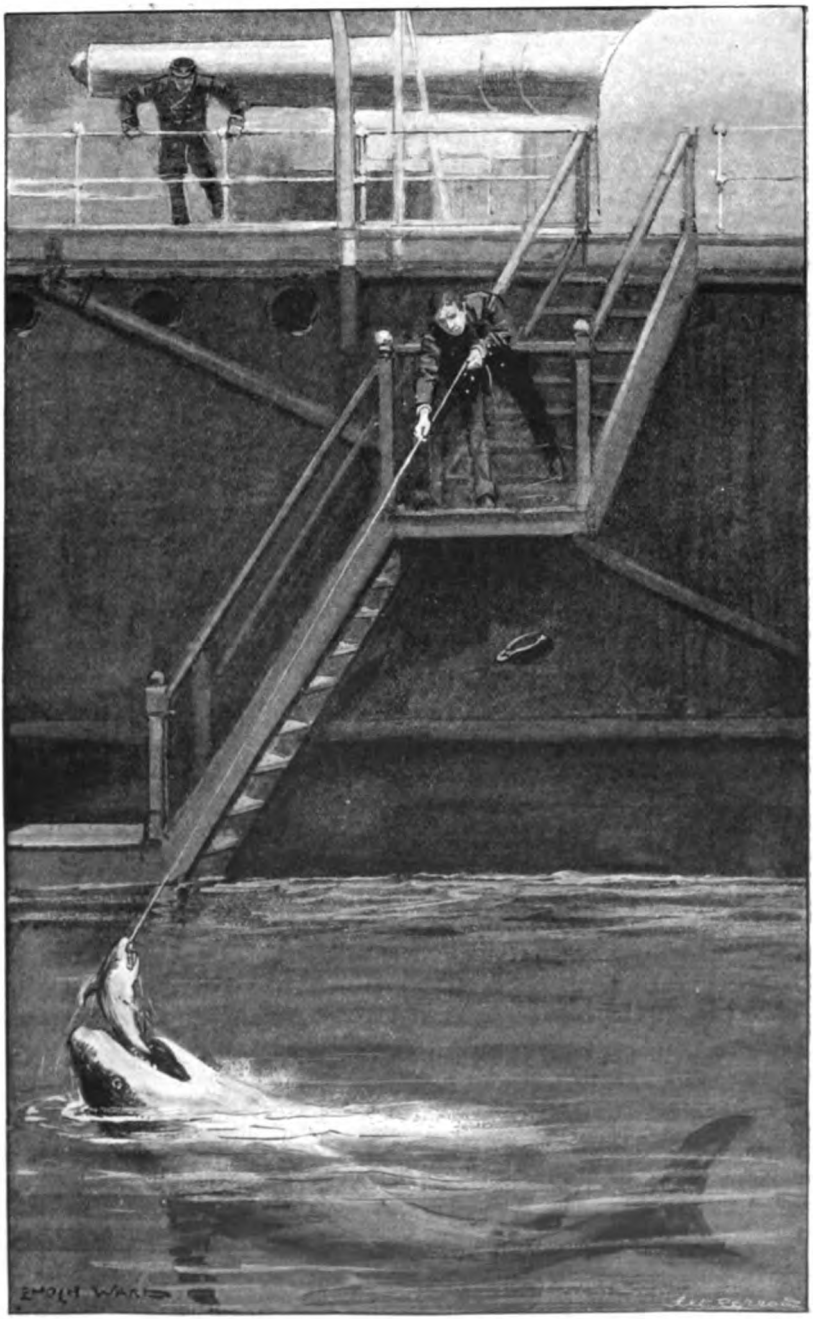
But, while keeping our first line of defence in efficiency, care has been taken that our sailors shall not afford an example of all work and no play making Jack a dull boy.

It is with the object, therefore, of setting forth in a popular form some modes in which Jack occupies his leisure moments that these articles have been written.

The different subjects treated of will be under the heads of 'Fishing,' 'Shooting,' and 'Riding;' and as the aim is to supply the 'man in the street' with the greatest amount possible of matter of interest and information, compatible with the limit of space, each subject occupies a separate paper. The present one, the first of the series, treats of fishing, and the conditions under which the 'gentle art' is practised by those in Her Majesty's Service.

It may be said that this pastime is not so common as, at first glance, one might be led to suppose it would be among those whose lives are spent upon the waters—the home of all fish. The reasons for this anomaly are various. First, it must not be concluded that all parts of the globe are equally adapted to the pursuit of fishing; indeed, the proverbial 'fisherman's luck' were a fine yield when compared to the very meagre reward for a hard day's work one obtains in some places visited. Then, again, it is a fact beyond dispute—though not too generally known—that in mid-ocean, distant from land, the denizens of the deep are almost wholly represented by the larger species, such as the whale, the shark, the porpoise, and the dolphin.

Moreover, the replacing in the Service of the sailing ship by the now universal steam-propelled vessel with her swift-whirling screw, has rendered impracticable, if not hopeless, any attempt to catch fish from the modern war-vessel under way, except, perhaps, the ever-voracious shark. But it may be here noted with regard to these tigers of the sea, that the sailor looks upon them —and rightly so—as his natural enemy, never losing an opportunity to assist at their extermination; and it is understood that a piece of white bunting or rag over a hook is often sufficient attraction wherewith to capture one of these monsters. However, the more modern method of destroying them is neither by hook nor harpoon, but in the following manner. An empty soda-water bottle is obtained, into which is put a small charge of guncotton with detonator attached; from this is led the electric wire, which in turn is connected up to the battery, after passing through the



A VERY MUCH LARGER SHARK ENGULFING IN ITS JAWS SHARK NUMBER ONE

cork, which latter is hermetically sealed with india-rubber solution. Having duly encased this truly 'deadly bottle' in a piece of salt pork or offal, it is 'paid out' astern at the end of a line along which is 'stopped up' the wire. 'Johnny Shark,' presently swimming leisurely by, spots the tempting morsel, and at once turning upon his side, with a single stroke of his propeller-like tail, secures at one and the same time his dinner and his death; for at the very instant his great jaws close upon the bait the modern fisherman touches the key of the battery, completing the circuit, and blowing the head and shoulders of the shark into a thousand atoms.

As instancing their voracity, the writer once saw a huge specimen of these monsters leap more than half its length out of water and seize in its capacious maw the lower portion of its already captured companion, which was depending from the spanker boom-end, where he had been left triced up until a bullet or two through the brain should have rendered him a less dangerous acquisition to have inboard.

Again may be noted the case where a young officer, while fishing from the ship in the outer harbour of Aden, was on the point of hauling out of the water an average-sized rock cod he had just caught, when it was swallowed whole by a small but ravenous shark, which then, of course, became attached to the line; but as the young fisherman was debating in his mind whether or not his light 'tackle' was equal to the strain of securing his unwonted capture, the matter was conclusively settled for him by a very much larger shark engulfing in its jaws shark number one, and making off with line and all.

Perhaps it is not generally known that every man-of-war is supplied with a seine, and with it, especially upon outlying stations where the vessel's visits to large seaport towns are few and far between, many is the enjoyable evening spent in making a good haul of fish. It will usually be found that there is on board each ship one particular officer who takes especial interest in matters piscatorial, and he it generally is who undertakes the organising of the seining parties, which, by the way, consist of officers and men alike.

The launch, or perhaps the pinnace, is the boat most frequently requisitioned to carry those who gladly welcome this change from the somewhat monotonous life on board. Immediately after 'evening quarters' she is dropped alongside the gangway. A few sundries in the way of frying-pans, fat, a bag of biscuit, and some salt, together with lanterns, candles, and

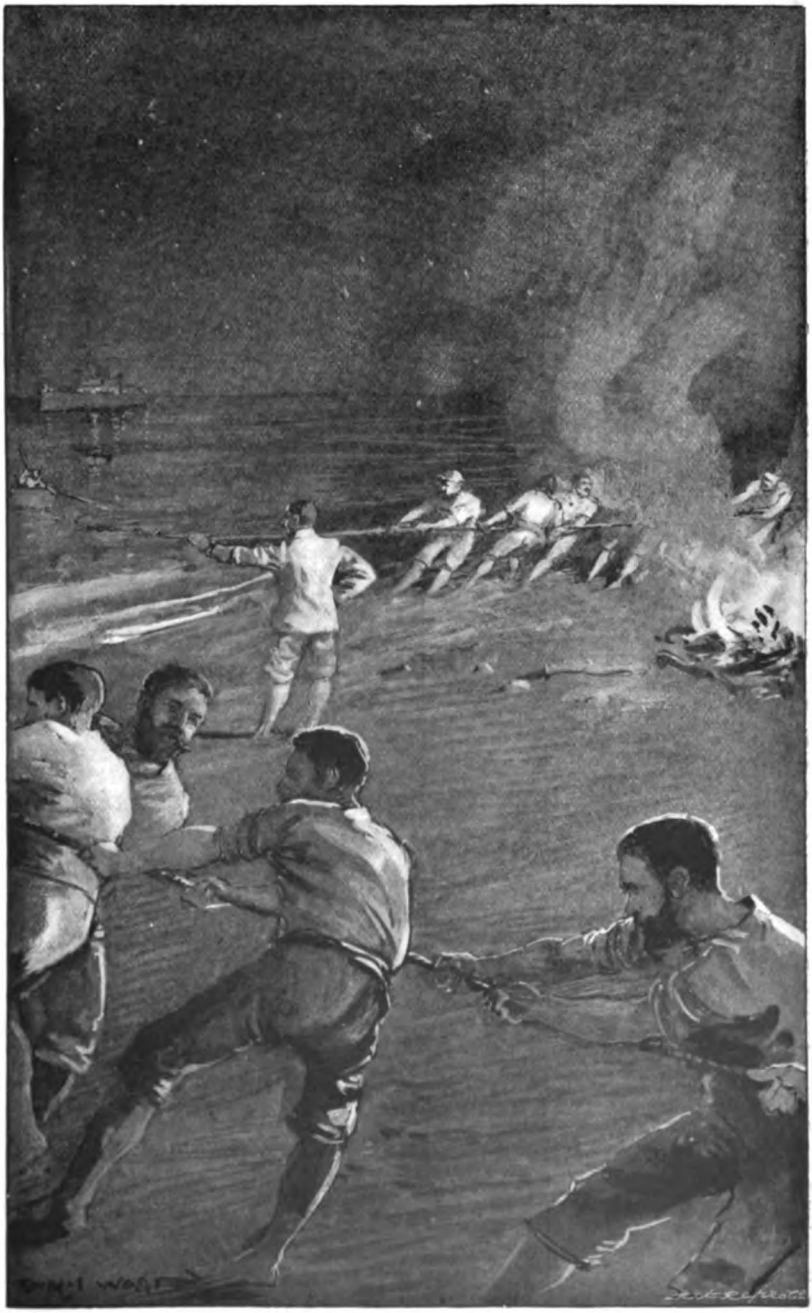
matches, are first passed down into the boat, which, when her beakers have been filled with fresh water, takes in tow the dinghy, wherein is stowed the seine all ready for 'shooting.' The boats, manned by the seining party themselves, then shove off and make towards the beach that has previously been decided upon as the most likely to afford good catches.

On arrival at the fishing-ground the pinnace is securely anchored off the beach, after having landed all such as have not already jumped overboard to swim ashore; for, let it be remarked, it is the invariable custom, of the bluejacket at all events, to adopt for seining the very lightest of costumes, in warm climates a pair of bathing-drawers frequently doing duty for the entire 'rig out.' Then comes the business of the day, or, rather, the night. Whilst three or four experienced hands in the dinghy are shooting the seine up against the tide, foraging parties are collecting wood, dried seaweed, and what not; and it is not long before a huge bonfire is sending forth its cheery glare, serving the double purpose of attracting the fish from the neighbouring waters, and afterwards cooking some of their numbers for the suppers of the fishermen.

So soon as the second line has been brought ashore, the word is passed to 'Haul in!' when, dividing themselves into two parties, all hands man the lines, and someone or other striking up a rousing fo'c'sle ditty, the net is steadily and slowly hauled to land, the two ends being gradually brought together the while. In the meantime the men in the dinghy may be seen lustily beating the water on the outside of 'the corks' (the top of the net), scaring back those fish who would make their escape.

It is almost invariably the case, at this style of fishing, that the prospects of the night's sport may be foretold from the first haul; and, should this be unsatisfactory, it will be found the wiser plan at once to shift to a different fishing-ground. But in the event of the initial 'shoot' proving successful, there is soon ample sport and plenty of fun to be had in picking out and collecting in buckets the finny creatures, whose number is only exceeded by their diversity of formation and species, stowing some in the dinghy, to be conveyed to the pinnace, while others are taken up the beach to the bonfire to be cooked and presently eaten.

Nor is the element of danger entirely absent; for, notably on the seaboard of the Indian Ocean, besides sea-eggs and other similar creatures running their spikes into one's feet (few wear



THE NET IS STEADILY AND SLOWLY HAULED TO LAND

shoes upon these expeditions), there is, for example, the stinging ray with its bayonet-like spear-head in the tail, which he is wont to plunge, with instant rapidity and irresistible force, into the leg of the unwary one who may inadvertently tread upon him. Then, again, we have the electric class of this same species, and it frequently happens that a bluejacket who has never before come across any of this kind of creature first learns of its 'shocking' properties by a personal experience of them.

A somewhat amusing instance of this, within the writer's recollection, was when, at a place named Sharja, in the Gulf of Oman, we one night caught a very powerful—electrically speaking—specimen of this sort of ray. Here, it was thought, was a grand opportunity for playing a joke upon one of the men, who was a decided greenhorn; but on his being advised to pick up that particular fish, he somehow guessed all was not as it should be, so to guard against its biting him—as he feared it would—he plunged his knife into the creature to despatch it, when the yell of surprise and pain that came from him might have been heard a good mile off; neither was it till twenty-four hours had passed over his head that he regained the full use of his right arm, which had been temporarily paralysed by the severe electric shock emitted from the fish, the current finding a ready conductor in his knife.

It is usual to extend these seining parties well into the small hours of the morning, not the least pleasant part of the excursion being when, pulling back to the ship maybe with a good boat-load of fine freshly caught fish, one of the Sims Reeves of the company will 'tip a stave,' all hands joining in the chorus with a gusto that seems inseparable from, and peculiar to, the singing of sailors. Thus, bathed in the moonlight, we pull along with steady stroke, until at length we sheer up alongside our vessel, when the boats are duly moored to the boom, and we all of us turn in to enjoy a well-earned sleep during the few hours that remain before 'all hands' are again called to begin another day of duty with 'scrub and wash decks.' At a later hour in the morning the different cooks-of-the-messes assemble on deck, when the catch of fish is apportioned as equally as may be.

Of the other forms of fishing, that most in vogue in the Service is undoubtedly—as would be imagined—with the ordinary deep-sea fishing-line, when the ship is at anchor, and, indeed, very good sport can be had when the vessel happens to be lying

in a roadstead (or, better still, a river) not too much frequented by steamers; but it is important on board a man-of-war that, in view of unpleasantness with the commander or first lieutenant, one should be careful not to damage or disfigure the paint-work by leaving bait about, hauling one's lines over it, &c.

Moreover, besides this not over-irksome disability, it frequently occurs that he who fishes from the 'chains' is made the subject of numerous practical jokes, possessing the merit of wit in a greater or less degree—the jerking of his line from out of a port in imitation of a bite, &c. &c. The writer calls to mind the case of a young officer, who, by the way, was an almost uniquely green exception of the *genus* midshipman. He was fishing one night in Bombay harbour, and had not had remarkably good luck, when towards nine o'clock he had occasion to go below for a few minutes; this he did, leaving his line to take care of itself for the time. But a brother-middy, ever ready for a joke, seeing the opportunity, thought it by far too good a chance to be lost; so diving down to the gun-room, he almost immediately returned with a tin of canned salmon and another of sardines. Hauling up the line, he securely hitched these on and lowered away, leaving the line to all appearances as he had found it. Having thus made up for the remissness on the part of the fish in giving themselves to be caught, he retired to a discreet distance, there, with a few other choice spirits, to await developments.

Of course there could be but one result: the young fisherman, the verdant middy, returning and finding an unwonted strain upon his line, hauled in hand over hand, already anticipating the welcome addition to his breakfast the next morning. However, on discovering the precise nature of his catch, it cannot be said that they were words of joy and thankfulness that fell from his lips; nor was his temper stilled or his tongue tied when there fell upon his ears the chorus of jeers and shouts of laughter emitted by his messmates who had, from their hiding place, been silent though inexpressibly amused witnesses of the whole scene. For many a long day afterwards it was a sure 'draw' to ask this young fellow which swam the faster, tinned salmon or sardines?

It is probable that many a travelled reader of this journal has had the experience of flying-fish jumping on board a vessel under way at night-time. In the days of sailing ships a positively sure way of obtaining a fresh supply daily of these herring-like fish was, when in suitable latitudes, by spreading out a net over the dolphin-striker back-ropes. And those who have had the pleasure

of tasting these delicate morsels can vouch for their excellence; especially in the West Indies, where the natives prepare them in various most appetising ways.

Fish of much larger kind than these little flyers have been known to jump clean out of water into a boat carrying an exposed lantern. During a stay of some months of one of our war-vessels at Muscat, the officers can vouch for its being the exception when this did not occur on every occasion of a boat communicating with the shore after dark.

Another phase of this pastime, although perhaps hardly to be classed, strictly speaking, with fishing, is turtle-turning. Ascension Island is, of course, the principal place where, so far as the Service is concerned, the practice is carried on, a regular staff of bluejackets and marines being stationed there, one of whose chief duties is the capturing of turtles for the Admiralty ponds situate on the island.

However, there are other parts of the world where the turtle is turned, notable among them being Karachi, at the mouth of the Indus. Here it is the common custom among the residents to organise periodical expeditions for the pursuit of this pastime; and as the harbour is never without at least one man-of-war, not a few naval men have experience of this form of piscatorial sport; and very good sport it is, requiring most patient and careful stalking to cut the turtles off from the water. This done, it resolves itself into turning the animal over upon its back with the aid of a handspike or lever, with which each member of the party is armed.

Of fishing with rod and line, the only difference in a Service man's experience from that of his less fortunate (in this respect) landsman brother is that, whereas the latter has perforce to follow, year in and year out, much upon the lines his grandfather adopted, the naval man has, in 'whipping' new rivers and streams, abundant opportunity of exercising his ingenuity in the matter of fly construction and so forth; while a new interest is lent to the sport in studying the habits, food, &c. of the many strange specimens of fish unknown to European countries, not to mention the zest afforded by the greater size and novel methods of fighting displayed by some of his captures.

EL PATO

BY W. H. HUDSON

I HAVE never seen a description in print of the game of El Pato, nor have I met with any mention of it in any English book or journal; and, so far as I know, the game does not now exist. Formerly, and for a long period, down to the fourth decade of this century, it was the most popular game in the Argentine country. To the gauchos of the great plains, who took to the back of a horse from childhood almost as spontaneously as a parasite to the animal on which it exists, the Pato was the game of games, and, in their country, as much as cricket and football and golf together to the inhabitants of this island. Nor could there have been any better game for men whose existence, or whose success in life, depended so much on their horsemanship, whose chief glory it was to be able to stick on under difficulties, or, when sticking on was impossible, to fall off gracefully and always cat-like, on their feet. To this game the people of the pampas were devoted up to a time when it came into the head of a president of the republic to have no more of it, and with a stroke of the pen it was accordingly abolished for ever.

It would take a strong man in this country to put down any

outdoor game to which the people are attached; and he was assuredly a very strong man who did away with El Pato in that land. If any other man who has occupied the position of head of the State at any time during the last eighty-eight years had attempted such a thing a universal shout of derision would have been the result; and wherever such an absurd decree had appeared pasted up on the walls and doors of churches, shops, and other public places, the gauchos would have been seen filling their mouths with water to squirt it over the despised paper. But this man was more than a president; he was that Rosas, called by his enemies the 'Nero of America.' Though by birth a member of a distinguished family, he was by predilection a gaucho, and early in life took to the semi-barbarous life of the plains. Among his fellows Rosas distinguished himself as a dare-devil, one who was not afraid to throw himself from the back of his own horse on to that of a wild horse in the midst of a flying herd into which he had charged. He had all the gaucho's native ferocity, his fierce hates and prejudices; and it was in fact his intimate knowledge of the people he lived with, his oneness in mind with them, that gave him his wonderful influence over them, and enabled him to carry out his ambitious schemes. But why, when he had succeeded in making himself all-powerful by means of their help, when he owed them so much, and the ties uniting him to them were so close, did he deprive them of their beloved pastime? The reason, which will sound almost ridiculous after what I have said of the man's character, was that he considered the game too rough. It is true that it had (for him) its advantages, since it made the men of the plains hardy, daring, resourceful fighters on horseback—the kind of men he most needed for his wars; on the other hand, it caused so much injury to the players, and resulted in so many bloody fights and fierce feuds between neighbours, that he considered he lost more than he gained by it.

There were not men enough in the country for his wants; even boys of twelve and fourteen were sometimes torn from the arms of their weeping mothers to be made soldiers of; he could not afford to have full-grown strong men injuring and killing each other for their own amusement. They must, like good patriots, sacrifice their pleasure for their country's sake. And at length, when his twenty years' reign was over; when people were again free to follow their own inclinations without fear of bullet and cold steel—it was generally cold steel in those days—those who had previously played the game had had roughness enough

in their lives, and now only wanted rest and ease; while the young men and youths who had not taken part in the game nor seen it played, had never come under its fascination, and had no desire to revive it.

When and where and how the game of El Pato first arose I have never heard; probably it was not invented or introduced by any person, but came into existence by chance, and being admirably suited to the disposition and habits of the horseman on the pampas (where I imagine the game must have had its origin) it quickly grew in favour and took deep root in the country. Unlike most outdoor games it retained its original simple, rude character to the end. Pato means duck; and to play the game a duck or fowl, or, as was usually the case, some larger domestic bird—turkey, gosling, or muscovy duck—was killed and sewn up in a piece of stout raw hide, forming a somewhat shapeless ball, twice as big as a football, and provided with four loops or handles of strong twisted raw hide made of a size convenient to be grasped by a man's hand. A great point was to have the ball and handles so strongly made that three or four powerful men could take hold and tug until they dragged each other to the ground without anything giving way.

Whenever it was resolved in any place to have a game, and someone had offered to provide the bird, and the meeting place had been settled, notice would be sent round among the neighbours; and at the appointed time all the men and youths living within a circle of several leagues would appear on the spot, mounted on their best horses. On the appearance of the man on the ground carrying the duck the others would give chase; and by-and-by he would be overtaken, and the ball wrested from his hand; the victor in his turn would be pursued, and when overtaken there would perhaps be a scuffle or scrimmage, as in football, only the strugglers would be first on horseback before dragging each other to the earth. Occasionally when this happened a couple of hot-headed players, angry at being hurt or worsted, would draw their weapons against each other in order to find who was in the right, or to prove which was the better man. But fight or no fight, someone would get the duck and carry it away to be chased again. Leagues of ground would be gone over by the players in this way, and at last someone, luckier or better mounted than his fellows, would get the duck, successfully run the gauntlet of the people scattered about on the plain, and make good his escape. He was the victor, and it was his right to carry the bird home and have it for his dinner. This

SOMEONE WOULD GET THE DUCK AND CARRY IT AWAY

was, however, a mere fiction; the man who carried off the duck made for the nearest house, followed by all the others; and there not only the duck was cooked, but a vast amount of meat to feed the whole of the players. While the dinner was in preparation, messengers would be despatched to neighbouring houses to invite the women; and on their arrival dancing would be started and kept up all night.

The game of El Pato, abolished a long time before I was born, was nothing but a memory of old and middle-aged men when I grew to boyhood and began to listen with interest to the tales of my elders. The most delightful old yarn-spinner, or historian of the vanished days, I remember at that period, was a gaucho neighbour named Francisco de la Cueva, familiarly known to us as 'Pancho,' a dark, thin wiry old fellow of over seventy; and one of the tales of his early years which most vividly impressed itself on my memory I shall now relate. The reason why this one of his innumerable stories of the past stuck in my mind was because it touched on an historical event of peculiar and melancholy interest to every Anglo-Argentine—I mean the disastrous attempt on Buenos Ayres by a British Army. But there is also in the narrative a glimpse of the grand old game of El Pato; and it is curious at this distance of time to see, as by a flash of lightning, the men of those days absorbed in a pastime which was so much to them, and is now so completely forgotten.

Old Pancho in his talk had begun to describe to us the man who had made the most lasting impression on his mind when he was a small boy in the early years of the century. This man was an estanciero (a landowner and cattle-breeder) whose estancia was in the neighbourhood of the lake and village of Chascomus, on the pampas south of Buenos Ayres. His name was Santos Rivera, but he was better known throughout that part of the country as the White Horse, and the White Father. These high-sounding pseudonyms had been bestowed on him on account of his imposing figure and the whiteness of his skin in a country where most men are very dark; also because of his proud, masterful temper, and (if the whole truth must be told) of the number of his natural children scattered about the country. In his neighbours' houses, or ranchos, the little ones were all taught to address him reverentially as 'Uncle'—on his appearance boys and girls would run to drop upon their knees before him and kiss his hand; he, after bestowing his blessing on them, and tweaking a nose or pinching an ear or two, would flourish his

whip over their heads as a sign that he had done with them, and that they must get out of his way as quickly as possible.

Santos, albeit a man of violent passions, with as little regard as most gauchos have for human life, was religious in his way; at all events he had the profoundest reverence for all those who were in the service of Holy Mother Church, and wore her liveries. It happened that the nearest religious house was a monastery of Dominicans, situated at nearly half a day's journey from his house, and it was Santos' custom to visit this monastery several times in the year, usually with a led horse, well laden with good things for his friends the friars—fat lambs, sucking pigs, turkeys and geese, the ribs of a fat cow; with, perhaps, meat pies, the wings and breast of an ostrich, and half a dozen armadillos.

Now it happened that, at the end of June, 1807, Santos all at once took it into his head to pay one of his periodical visits to the monastery, and, after collecting all the provisions he wished to take to his friends, by chance his eyes alighted on Pancho—his poor neighbour's little son, then aged about ten, a thin, small boy, but a good rider—and it occurred to his mind that, instead of leading the second horse, he would mount this small boy, who weighed nothing, on its back so as to travel with more comfort. Accordingly, he ordered the boy to be at the house an hour before daylight to go with him; and next morning they set out and duly arrived at their destination before noon. The friars received their visitor with open arms, and smacked their lips over the good things they took from Pancho's horse; and after a plentiful dinner had been eaten they all sat down out of doors to sip maté and have a long talk; for although the time was mid-winter the weather was warm and pleasant.

As they sat there a youth, who lived in the neighbourhood, came at a fast gallop to the gate, shouting 'Los Ingleses!' in great excitement. Santos and his friends jumped up, and, rushing to the gate, climbed on to the posts and bars, and saw at a distance of about a mile and a half to the east a vast army of men marching in the direction of Buenos Ayres. They could see that the foremost part of the army had halted on the banks of a stream which flowed close by the monastery, and emptied itself in the Plata River a few miles to the east. This invading army was composed of infantry, but a great many persons on horseback could be seen following it. These, the youth explained, were neighbours, who had come to look at the English invaders; and he said that the soldiers, on arriving by the stream, were

HE QUICKLY SUCCEEDED IN GRASPING THE DISENGAGED HANDLE

throwing away their blankets, and that the people were picking them up.

When Santos heard this he made up his mind to go and join the crowd, and, mounting his horse, and followed by Pancho and two of the friars, who wished to secure a few blankets for the monastery, they set out at a gallop for the stream.

When they reached the spot they found that the English, not satisfied with the ford, which had a very muddy bottom, had made a new crossing-place for themselves by cutting down the banks on both sides, and that a vast number of blankets had been folded and laid in the bed of the stream, possibly to prevent the wheels of the gun-carriages from sinking too deeply in the clay.

Blankets in hundreds were also being thrown away on the bank, and the natives were picking them up and loading their horses with them. Santos at once threw himself into the crowd and gathered about a dozen blankets, the best he could find, and gave most of them to the friars, ordering Pancho to tie the others on the back of his horse. This business over, he bade good-bye to his friends, and set out on his return home, which he expected to reach before midnight. But there was yet another adventure to be encountered on the way.

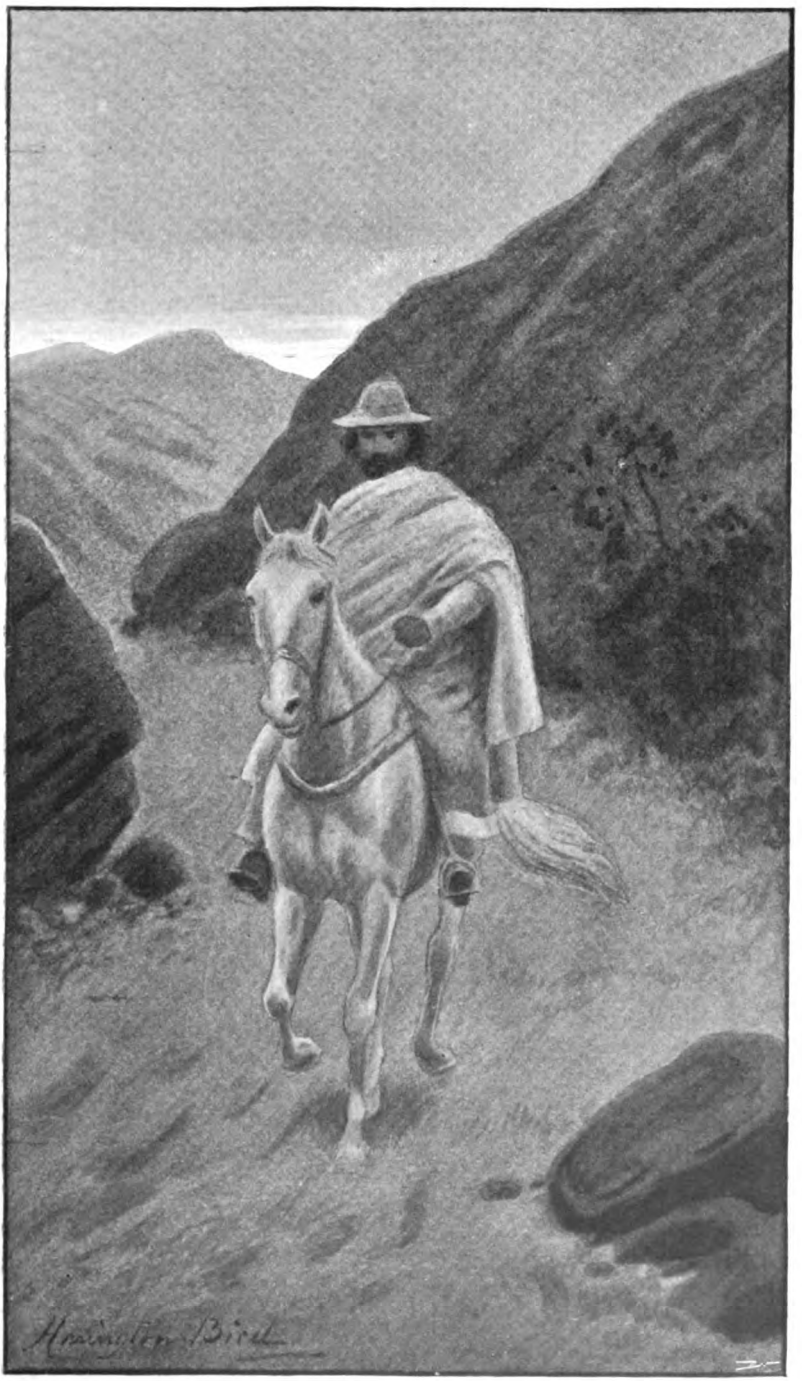
It was past the middle of the afternoon, after they had ridden about six leagues, when they spied at a distance ahead a great number of men riding about over the green plain.

'El Pato!' shouted Santos, urging his horse to a gallop, and, coming to where the fight for the duck was proceeding, he stood for a while looking on with keen interest. But to be a mere spectator of such a scene was more than he could stand, and, suddenly dismounting, he threw off some of the heaviest portions of his horse gear, and, ordering Pancho to take them up, then to follow and keep near him, he dashed into the crowd. The players, to the number of sixty or seventy men, had gathered from all sides, and were standing on their horses in a circle waiting to see the result of a prolonged struggle for the duck between three men who had hold of the ball. They were strong men, and all appeared equally determined to take the prize; they tugged and they strained, almost dragging each other out of the saddles, their well-trained horses aiding them as when resisting the shock and tug of a lassoed animal. One was a very big powerful mulatto, and the bystanders, sure of his victory, were only waiting to see him wrest the duck from the others to rush upon and attempt to deprive him of it.

Santos declined to stand inactive; for was there not a fourth handle to the ball, and room for one more player to join in the struggle? Accordingly, forcing his horse into the middle of the group, he quickly succeeded in grasping the disengaged handle. A cry of resentment at his interference went up from some of the bystanders, mixed with applause at his daring, from others, while the three men who had previously been fighting against each other, each for himself, now perceived that they had a common enemy. Madly excited as they were by the struggle, they could not help being startled by this stranger's formidable appearance—a huge man in the pride of his strength, very white-skinned, and with a black beard that came down to his waist; displaying, when he flung back his poncho, the great knife and big brass-barrelled pistol he wore at his belt. Very soon after Santos joined the fray all four men came to the earth. But they did not all fall together; the last to go down was Santos, who could not be dragged off his horse, and in the end horse and man came down on top of the others. In coming down two of the men had lost their hold of the ball. Last of all the mulatto, to save himself from being crushed under the horse, was forced to let go, and in his rage at being defeated drew his knife against the stranger. Santos, too quick for him, dealt him a blow on the forehead with the muzzle of his pistol, which sent him again to the earth, stunned. Of the four Santos alone had so far escaped injury, and rising and remounting, still holding the ball in his hand, he rode out of the crowd, the people opening on each side to make way for him.

In the crowd there was one tall imposing man wearing a white poncho and many silver ornaments, and a very long knife in an embossed silver sheath; the horse he rode was also white and covered with silver trappings. This man alone raised his voice against the game being allowed to end in such a manner. 'Friends and comrades,' he cried out, 'is this to be the end? If this stranger is allowed to carry the duck away, it will not be on account of his stronger wrist and better horse, but because he carries fire-arms. Friends, what do you say?'

But there was no answer; the sight of that deadly struggle and its termination had produced in the onlookers so deep a sense of the stranger's power and resolution that they were quite willing to let him go in peace. The man on the white horse, with a scowl of anger and contempt, turned from them and began to follow Santos at a distance of about fifty yards. When Santos urged his horse to a gallop the other did the same; when he fell into a walk, so did the other; whenever Santos turned back to



A WHITE FORM FOLLOWING THEM LIKE A GHOST

come to close quarters with his follower the other retired, only to turn and follow again as soon as Santos resumed his course. In this way they travelled till sunset. Santos wore a grave face, but was calm and collected, but little Pancho was in great terror. 'Oh, uncle,' he cried, 'for the love of the saints fire your pistol at that man and kill him, so that he may not kill us.' The other only laughed. 'Foolish boy,' he replied, 'do you not know that he is waiting for me to fire at him? He knows that at this distance I could not hit him, and that when I had discharged my pistol we should be equal, knife to knife; and who knows then which would kill the other? God knows best, and he has put it into my heart not to fire.'

After it grew dark they went slower, and the man then lessened the distance between them; they could hear the chink-chink of his silver trappings, and when Pancho looked behind he could vaguely see a white form following them like a ghost. Then all at once their follower made a dash forward and threw his bolas, and Santos' horse plunged and reared, then came to a standstill, his legs caught in the bolas. With a curse the rider flung himself to the earth, and with his knife cut the cord of the bolas, and remounting resumed his way, the stranger still keeping his distance.

At length, near midnight, the river Sanboronbon was reached, where at the ford it was about forty yards wide and not deeper than the saddle-girth in the deepest parts.

'Let your heart be glad, Pancho,' said Santos, as they went down to the water, 'for now our time is come, and be careful to do as I tell you.'

Very slowly they crossed, their horses refusing to drink the brackish water; and on emerging on the south side Santos slipped quietly off his horse, and speaking in a low voice ordered Pancho to ride slowly forward with both horses and wait for him on the road. He explained that the man on the white horse would be unable to see him crouching under the bank, and thinking the coast clear would cross over, only to be received with a pistol shot fired at short range. Pancho was delighted at the thought of deliverance from that terrible white figure that had so long followed them. But Santos waited for his foe to appear in vain. Either the man had some suspicion of the trick intended to be played on him or he had grown tired of the chase; and at last the faint chink of silver ornaments and sound of hoofs were heard retreating, and grew fainter and fainter until they ceased.

So ended the adventure, and Santos, followed by his sleepy

little attendant, safely reached his home, duck, military blankets, and all.

I believe the story I have just told to be true in every detail; but as I heard it in early boyhood, and the events described happened so long before, the reader may be inclined to doubt the accuracy of the facts relating to the British invasion of Buenos Ayres. That story of the blankets struck me as curious when I came to write it down, and I have just consulted the proceedings of Lieutenant-General Whitelocke's Court Martial, with his defence, published in London in 1808, in order to discover if it contained anything about such an incident. On page 57 of the second volume occurs the following statement, made by General Gower in his evidence: 'The men, particularly of Brigadier-General Lumley's Brigade, were very much exhausted, and Lieutenant-General Whitelocke, to give them a chance of getting on with tolerable rapidity, ordered all the blankets of the army to be thrown down.'

There is nothing, however, in the evidence about the blankets having been used to make a firmer bottom for the army to cross the stream; nor is the name of the stream where the blankets were thrown away mentioned at all.

Another point in the old gaucho's story may strike the reader as very strange and almost incredible; this is, that within a very few miles of the army of the hated foreign invader, during its march on the capital, where the greatest excitement prevailed and every preparation for defence was being made, a large number of men were amusing themselves at the game of El Pato. To those who are acquainted with the character of the gaucho there is nothing incredible in such a fact; for the gaucho is absolutely devoid of the sentiment of patriotism, and regards all rulers, all in authority from the highest to the lowest, as his chief enemies and the worse kind of robbers, since they rob him not only of his goods but of his liberty.

It mattered not to him whether his country paid tribute to Spain or to England, whether a man appointed by someone at a distance as Governor had black eyes or blue eyes. It was seen that when the Spanish dominion came to an end his hatred was transferred to the ruling cliques of a so-called Republic. When the gauchos attached themselves to Rosas, and assisted him to climb into power, they were under the delusion that he was one of themselves, and would give them that perfect liberty to live their own lives in their own way which is their only desire. They found out their mistake when it was too late.

A SOUTH-COUNTRY HORSE-SHOW

BY GEORGE GORDON

'WHICH day is your horse-show?' is a question you daily hear one man put to another through the summer in our part of the world, and at every railway station you are faced by enormous placards announcing the fact that, on such and such a day, 'the West Melton Society will hold its Annual Exhibition of Hunters, Hacks, Harness horses, and young Stock, when Prizes of the value of 000*l.* will be offered. A Public Luncheon will take place on the Showground, at which the Earl of Lovesport, President for the year, will take the chair. A Military Band will be in attendance, and Special Trains [*see* handbills] will run' &c. &c. &c. In other words, the attention of the public is called to the fact that West Melton is getting ready for its great summer function, for which the owners of the big houses prepare to fill them, and their brethren in smaller ones seize the opportunity of asking all their friends from far and near to come and lunch.

Let me try to give a faint outline of the day's proceedings.

The showyard committee are at length to be relieved of their anxiety. For a fortnight past their lives have been a burden, rendered especially so by candid friends who insist on assuring them that the contractor is all behindhand; that the showyard will never be ready in time; that the stand (they know for a fact) is insecure and will come down; and so on, *ad infinitum*. But as the clock of the neighbouring church strikes nine and the first horse walks in at the gates, the very last nail is being driven into the stand, and they heave a sigh of relief, knowing that, bar accidents, such as the stand giving way, or (as I once saw) the canvas being ripped off the whole line of boxes by a whirlwind, they are 'gentlemen at large' for the day, and can enjoy themselves.

Meanwhile the plot thickens, and horses pour in apace. The old hands who have been at the game for years, and go on day after day from one show to another, seem intuitively to know exactly where to go, whilst the novice in charge of a local exhibit is all at sea, and as likely as not will try to stable his charge in the bandstand.

The showyard that I have in my mind's eye is (as an estate agent would say) a pleasantly and conveniently situated one. Close to a model country town, and within half a mile or so of the station, it lies on high ground overlooking one of the most picturesque and beautifully timbered parks in the south of England—one, moreover, abounding in historical associations—not that that counts for much with the horse-loving show-goer! For its size the ring is admirably contrived, having good wide-sweeping ends, and being large enough to let a horse gallop. Being, moreover, on a slight incline, it is possible to show off a horse that can use his shoulders downhill, or, *vice versâ*, take the cheek out of a bumptious one by giving him a good bucketing the reverse way—no mean advantage sometimes! Added to this, there is a smaller field adjoining, where all the yearlings and other juvenile classes are stabled and got ready for the judging ring without bringing them dancing and plunging amongst the crowd.

OUR GRAND STAND

But it is now ten o'clock, and here come the judges to start on their long day's work. They are four in all, and for the early part of the day, at any rate, are going to work in pairs at each end of the big ring, so as to economise time, and enable us to get through the heavy programme before nightfall.

That little, slim, greyheaded man, in the neatest of breeches and gaiters, has been the terror of the leading hound of a celebrated Midland pack for more years than I care to remember, and can still more than hold his own in a quick dart from Hell Meadow Covert or Radbourne Rough. With him is an equally well-known judge and performer over a country, who now hails from Rutland, but whom Yorkshire's broad acres claim as their own.

You might not think it, but the portly figure in black coat

and tall hat at the other end of the ring used to be a slim undergraduate, and as fine a horseman over the pastures of Cottenham as one could wish to see. To his indefatigable researches what do not masters of hounds owe? for has not his reverence unearthed and immortalised the pedigrees of all their leading favourites? His companion is one of the best known all-round sportsmen in the West of England. Indeed, he may be said to be a perfect compendium of knowledge, and can discourse to you, with authority, on any subject, be it racing, hunting, county business, or (for aught I know) theology.

And now the brood-mares and foals make their appearance—and what nice mares there are amongst them! When we cast our thoughts back ten years and remember the class of animal we then used to see in this show-ring, it is indeed a reminder of what we owe to the Compton Stud Company. That big bay mare is one of their earliest produce, and is probably one of the best known hunter brood-mares in the country. Not a particularly taking one to look at, do you say? But just note her power and scope, and you will scarcely wonder at her having taken first prize in almost every show-ring. Certainly to-day we shall be surprised if she does not walk out with the blue ribbon. A wonderfully shapely mare is that chestnut, and many is the prize she has taken, and in good company, too, but beside the bay she appears lacking in size. A sweet lot of foals, too, the best of them, as far as one can see, by Yard Arm and Lifeboat. Surely it is very unwise to let those two run loose! that one has already been within an ace of being badly kicked by a mare who disclaimed its maternity and would have nothing to say to it, whilst the other one was all but slipping up under the rails. Breeders ought to know better than to run such risks. You breed a colt that you fondly hope may one day be worth 300*l.* or 400*l.*, and yet for the want of the merest trifle in the way of extra trouble and expense you get his leg or a rib broken and render him worthless. It ought to be a standing rule that no foal be admitted to any ring otherwise than led in hand.

Exeunt the brood-mares, to be succeeded in rotation by classes of yearlings, two- and three-year-olds, and some real beauties there are amongst them; but what a pity it is that it should be thought necessary to show them so fat! It is the fashion, I know; but can it be good for them? I remember acting as steward of the ring to one of the best known of our Midland Counties judges. Class after class of young ones came in, each fatter than the preceding one. At last he could stand it

no longer. 'Bless me,' said he, 'here they come again! Look at that!' pointing to a yearling as fat as a Christmas bullock; 'why, it's like a beer-barrel on toothpicks!' No doubt this over-forcing is a fruitful source of mischief in young stock, and the question comes in whether it would not be expedient for judges to discourage it as much as possible.

What is a hack? Is he for use, or for ornamental purposes only? If the latter, there can be no question as to at once awarding the prizes to those two marvellous steppers that are now going round the ring; and yet somehow they don't quite tally with one's idea of the little well-bred armchair that, with reins on its neck, skims over the turf by the side of the road, and lands you at the meet, fourteen miles off, without having turned a hair. Whether one would care to ride fourteen miles to covert on one of the first-prize showyard hacks is a matter I will leave to others to decide. For myself, I fancy I should be dead before I got half-way, and perhaps so would the hack! Still, fashion is everything, so for the present this type must apparently be accepted as the model of a hack.

JUDGING

At this juncture the bell rings for lunch, a by no means unwelcome sound to most of us. Owing to press of time, it has ceased to be the regular set function it once was; but, as we are nothing if not loyal, we drink Her Majesty's health, as well as success to the show, and finish by toasting our noble President.

Lunch over, we once more repair to the ring for the judging of the weight-carrying hunters who are awaiting orders to come in. Here they are—one, two, three, four—eleven in all. Two widely known public performers, that chestnut and the grey following him. Not an especially prepossessing horse the former in his slower paces; but wait till he gallops, and then you will perchance change your mind. Moreover he has the advantage of being ridden by probably the most accomplished horseman that you can see in a show-ring, so he will lack nothing in the way of being shown off. The grey is certainly a charming horse, with power and quality, and every inch a gentleman. These two have been ringing the changes on one another at several of the principal

shows lately—first one and then the other winning. *Quot homines, tot sententiæ!* Which will it be to-day?

Treading on the heels of these two giants comes another grey, equally as well, if not even better, known in this West countree, for he has been first or second at almost every local show for the last three years—a beautiful mover in his slower paces, but not the galloper that the other two are; withal perhaps a trifle plain and common about the quarters and hocks. No horse in the yard, however, will give you a pleasanter ride, and he is, moreover, a *bona-fide* 'foxcatching' hunter.

Besides these there are several 'useful' animals, but not of sufficient *class* to be dangerous, and one extremely neat dark brown horse, nice enough for anything, but obviously no use in a fifteen-stone class. But, as his owner plaintively observes, 'How else am I to show him, as he is certainly too big for a light-weight class?' It is no doubt hard luck, but the only chance for him is at the bigger shows, where they have three classes for hunters. Then he will take a deal of beating.

A CHAMPION HUNTER

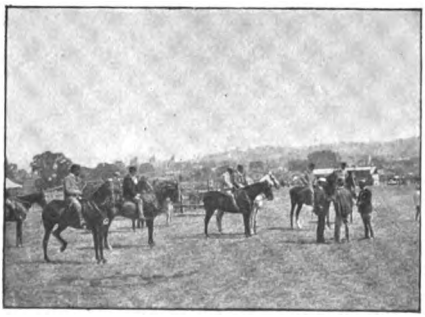
But meanwhile the judges have made up their minds, and after long consideration have ultimately awarded the blue rosette to the grey—a decision at which we do not grumble, though it appears to cause some dissatisfaction to the rider of the chestnut.

'Aren't they going to jump?' we hear a lady's silvery tones inquiring from the stand. No, my dear madam. Paradoxical as it may appear, the last thing that a champion hunter (save the mark!) is expected to do is to *jump*.

There have been from time to time divers criticisms and suggestions on this subject. One that I heard not long ago was that a horse should bring a certificate from a master of hounds to the effect that he really was a *bona-fide* hunter. But would not this be very much akin to the old system of 'qualifying' for hunt steeplechases, when one used invariably to see three or four longtails 'out with hounds,' and that was all? It seems to me that the plan would merely entail a certain amount of extra trouble, and would answer no practical purpose whatever in the end.

Many people roundly assert that they ought to jump fences to

the satisfaction of the judges to prove that they are hunters. The objections to this course are numerous, and as counsel for the horse and his owner, I will plead three—in my humble opinion, cogent ones. In the first place, a really high-class horse is too valuable an article to be knocked about day after day for the amusement of the public (for that is what it really means). Secondly, you may take the best hunter in the world into a ring, and find that in cold blood, before a noisy crowd, and often on ground as hard as iron, he will absolutely decline to look at a fence; and, thirdly, the more generally accepted theory amongst experts is that these tip-top show horses are meant to be looked on more as object lessons as to what the type and model of a true-shaped hunter should be than as exponents of the art of jumping.



LIGHT-WEIGHT HUNTERS

There is not one horse in a thousand that with schooling cannot be made to jump more or less, but you can *never* make him a fine walker or galloper if he is lacking in the make and shape essential to his being such.

Light-weight hunters are always a strong class at this show, both in quality and number, and this year is no exception to the rule. Out of twenty-seven in the catalogue, twenty-five appear before the judges. The first weed-out, however, considerably reduces this number, as after a walk, trot and canter round, at least half are relegated to obscurity, to be no more seen. Then follows another canter, and then a minute inspection of the remainder, after which they are drawn up in two lines, and it is plain that the issue lies amongst those half-dozen in the front rank facing the stand. These the judges ride in turn.

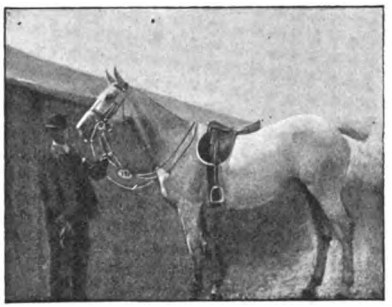
Then 'Kindly take your saddles off, gentlemen.' No. 1 on the right looks confident, but his countenance soon falls, as after the run down in hand No. 4 is told, 'You go up on the right of the line.'

A consultation follows between the two judges, and a third judge is asked to come in. Another consultation. 'Very well—I'm agreeable,' you hear one of the original judges say, and you know then the end has come, and just as the patience of the

spectators is well nigh exhausted, the rosettes are handed out, and the thing is over.

It has taken fifty-five minutes to judge this class, so no competitor can complain of any want of due consideration.

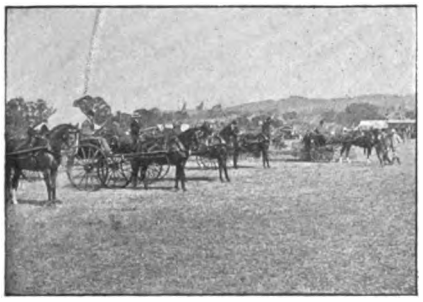
The scene is now changed to harness classes, which, however, resolve themselves, as at most other shows, into a one-horse, or rather two-horse, piece for those marvellous performers Lord Slapdash and Lady Flareup. They begin by taking first and second prizes in the single harness class. They then reappear in double harness, and wind up by the easiest of wins in the tandem class.



A LIGHT-WEIGHT HUNTER

Their extraordinary action and the artistic way in which they are handled delight the spectators, and when their skilful pilot finishes off by circling round and round the water jump, the stand fairly rings with applause.

I take it that at least two-thirds of the company at any horse-show look forward to the jumping as the *pièce de résistance*, whilst on the other hand most true lovers of the horse, as a noble animal, probably feel that when the jumping begins is the time to leave the show. Too often it degenerates into the feeblest exhibition on the part of both horse and rider, a liberal amount of temper as well as incapacity being shown by each. With the exception, indeed, of Rotten Row, where will you see as much bad horsemanship as in the show-ring?



HARNESS

At the same time one cannot help admiring the performances of a tried veteran like our well-known old friend, Friar's Balsam. What a wonderful old horse it is! It seems ages ago—certainly six years or so—since I saw him break down so badly in the Exeter ring that he could scarcely be got to his stable, and yet

during last summer, with the ground like adamant, he was touring the country *almost* as gaily as ever, taking his fences in true hunting style, and generally succeeding in picking up, at any rate, one of the prizes. Report says he has won something like 2,000*l.* in prizes, and he has certainly proved a veritable mine of wealth to his owner, into whose possession he came in exchange for a *cart colt.*

I am not sure that a band is altogether an unmitigated blessing! Was it Dick Christian or Tom Oliver who described his idea of real misery as, 'Riding a ewe-necked, star-gazing horse, in a snaffle bridle, down a hill covered with molehills, with a hat that don't fit, one foot out of the stirrup, and a fly in your eye'? A most harrowing situation, certainly. Still it is run very close by riding a green, frivolous four-year-old in a show-ring, when just as you flatter yourself you have got his back down, and have some chance of remaining 'on the plate,' the big drum gives three momentous thumps, and the band bursts into full cry almost under your juvenile's nose. No! It's no fun at all! And yet what would the non-horsey portion of the company do without their music?

Had I the ordering of the weather for a horse-show day, I should prescribe a nice, fine, balmy morning—not too hot—to tempt people away from their homes.

Then, having got them once safely landed in your showyard, it is most desirable to arrange for a smart storm about two o'clock—not to last too long, but just long enough to induce people to fill the stand. If in addition you can make your day tally with the early-closing day of your own or one or two neighbouring towns, so much the better.

The combination of these three conditions ought, if anything will, to ensure the best possible gate, and leave your society with a handsome surplus for the year, which, let us hope, will ever be the fate of the West Melton Society's Show.

SPORT IN WAR

BY COLONEL R. S. S. BADEN-POWELL, F.R.G.S.

'WHAT sort of sport did you have out there?' is the question with which men have, as a rule, greeted one on return from the campaign in Rhodesia; and one could truthfully say, 'We had excellent sport.' For, in addition to the ordinary experiences included under that head, the work involved in the military operations was sufficiently sporting in itself to fill up a good measure of enjoyment.

In the first place, scouting played a very prominent part in the preliminaries to major operations, and gave opportunities for the exercise of all the arts and resources of woodcraft, coupled with the excitement incidental to contending against wild beasts of the human kind—men of special cunning, pluck, and cruelty.

This scouting, to be successful, necessitated one's going with the very slenderest escort—frequently with one man only, to look after the horses—and for long distances away from our main body, into the districts occupied by the enemy. Thus, one was thrown entirely on one's own resources, with the stimulating knowledge that if you did not maintain a sufficient alertness of observation and action, you stood a very good chance indeed, not only of failing to gain information which you were desired to seek, but also of getting yourself wiped out as many a better man had been before, by the ruthless, bloodthirsty foe.

'Spooring,' or tracking, was our main source of guidance and information, and night the cover under which we were able to make our way about the enemy's country with impunity. For a pastime involving all the points that go to make up 'sport' in the eyes of a Briton—viz. hard work, adventure, general discomfort, and genuine fun—commend me to scouting.

Then the actual tackling the enemy was not, especially during the latter part of the operations, of the cut-and-dried

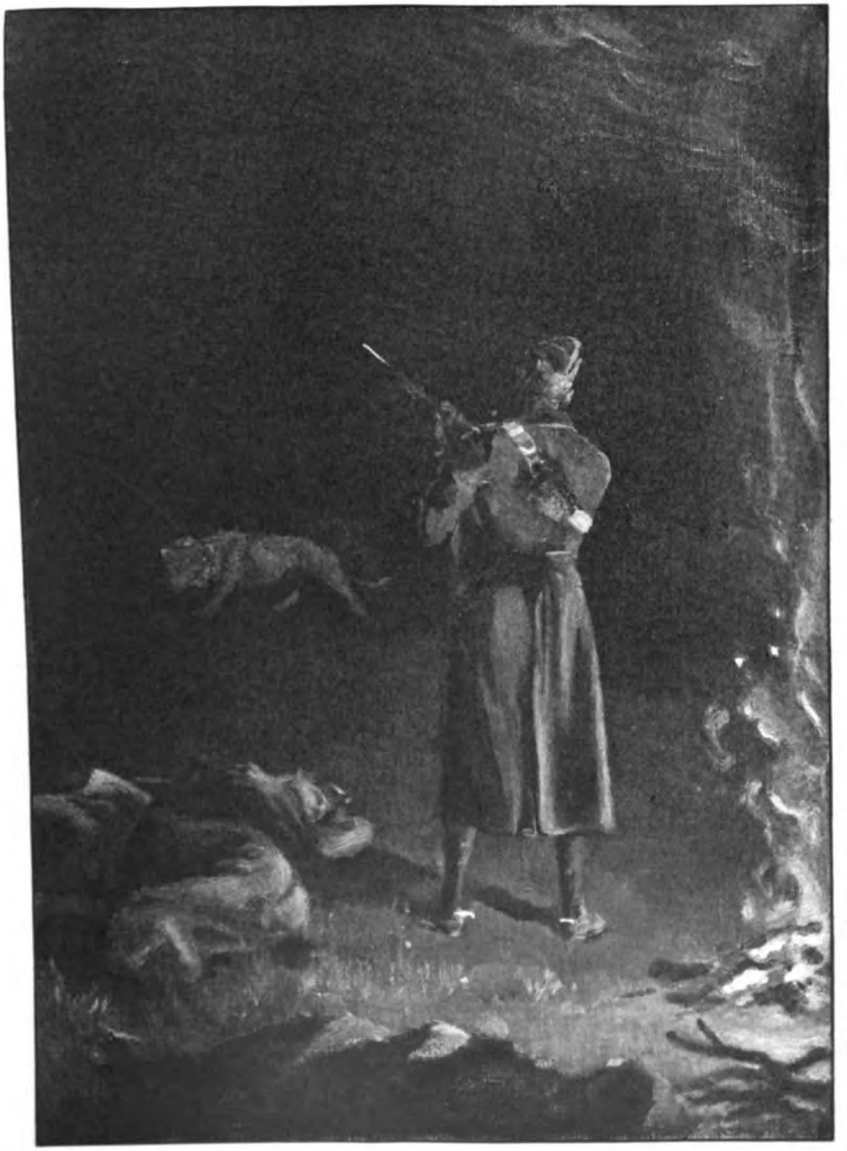
order of tactics. There was no drawing up of opposing forces in battle-array, or majestic advancing of earth-shaking squadrons to the clash of arms; but you had to approach a koppie or peak of piled-up granite boulders, where not an enemy was visible, but which you knew was honeycombed with caves and crannies all full of watching niggers fingering guns of every kind and calibre. You were expected to climb up this loopholed pyramid to gain the entrance to its caves, which was somewhere near the top, as a rule, and if you were lucky enough to escape an elephant bullet from one side or another, or a charge of slugs from a crevice underfoot, you had the privilege of firing a few shots down the drain-like entrance to the cave, and of then lowering yourself quickly after them into the black uncertainty below. Although I never appreciated this form of sport at its proper worth, there were many in our forces who did. It cannot be denied that there was a 'glorious uncertainty' about it, such as could not be surpassed in any other variety of amusement.

Then, when the enemy had been hard hit and driven from their positions, it became necessary to hunt them up with flying patrols and small columns. This took us into wild and distant corners of the country, and until their surrender was obtained, this man-hunting afforded us plenty of excitement and novel experience.

In addition to military operations such as these, we saw something of the actual sport proper of the country, since supplies, especially of meat, were very scarce with us. Therefore the game-laws were by special ordinance suspended, and we availed ourselves of every opportunity to get buck or other food. In many districts we found it sufficiently abundant, while in others the fatal scourge of rinderpest had done its work—especially among the koodoo—and had decimated the former troops of game.

We got, at various times, koodoo, sable, and roan antelope, wildebeeste, hartebeeste, reit-buck, stein-buck, duyker, hares, wild-pig, quagga, and twice our patrols saw giraffe. Then of birds we saw ostriches and shot paauw, korhan, so-called pheasants, partridges, guinea-fowl, duck, and plover. And in many of the streams the men caught fish, which, though in London they might be considered somewhat overcharged with bones and mud, yet served as a pleasing variation to our daily fare of tinned ration beef.

The pleasures of the pursuit of game were all the more en-



WITHIN THE HALO OF OUR WATCHFIRES

hanced by the knowledge that the meat was really necessary to us, and especially by the fact that we often carried out our sport at the risk of being ourselves the quarry of some sneaking band of rebel warriors.

Moreover, to all our fun a seasoning was added in the shape of lions, whose presence or propinquity was very frequently impressed upon us at nights by deep-toned grunts or ghostly apparitions within the halo of our watchfires. In defiance of the rules of war—which forbid the use of fires by

SLOWLY MOVING OVER THE BOULDERS OF THE RIVER-BED

night, as guiding an enemy's night attack—we had a ring of bright fires burning round our bivouac to scare away the lions. Frequently our sentries fired upon them as they kept a waiting watch, prowling from point to point outside our line of men. But, in spite of such precautions, on one occasion they took one of our horses, and on another they carried off a mule.

By day we saw them too. One patrol, indeed, came upon a group of nine lying dozing in the bush; and when the nine arose and yawned and stretched their massive jaws and limbs, the patrol, remembering the old maxim concerning the relations

between discretion and valour, changed the course of their advance and took another line.

One time when I was patrolling the bank of the Shangani River with three men, the massive form of a lion was seen slowly moving over the boulders of the river-bed. The corporal and I jumped off our horses in a moment, and fired a volley *à deux*, at about 180 yards. One shot thudded into him, the other striking the ground just under his belly. He sprang with a light bound over a rock and disappeared from our view. Posting one man on a high point on the bank to watch the river-bed, and leaving the other in charge of our horses, the corporal and I made our way down to where we had last seen the lion. We were armed with Lee-Metford carbines, and we turned on our magazines

WATCHING THE RIVER-BED

in order to have a good running fire available should our quarry demand it.

Meantime our main body coming along the opposite bank of the river had seen our manœuvre, and an officer and one man had come down into the river-bed from their side to help us.

Gradually and cautiously we surrounded the spot where we guessed the lion to be—cautiously, at least, as far as three of us were concerned; the fourth, the man who had come from the main body, was moving in a far freer and more confident manner than any of us could boast; he clambered over the rocks and sprang with agility into the most likely corners for finding a wounded lion lying ambushed, and his sole weapon was his revolver—for he was a farrier. Such is Tommy Atkins; whether it is the outcome of

HE TURNED ABOUT GROWLING SAVAGELY

sheer pluck, or of ignorance, or of both combined, the fact remains that he will sail gaily in where danger lies, and as often as not sail gaily out again unharmed.

However, to continue: at last we were on the spot, but no lion was there—an occasional splash of blood, and here and there, where sand lay between the rocks, the impress of a mighty paw, showed that he had moved away after being hit. But soon all traces ceased, and though we searched for long we could find no further sign of him.

We halted on the river-bank during the intense heat of the day, and before resuming our march in the evening, we sallied out once more to search the river-bed and an islet grown with bushes, where we hoped he might yet be. And while we searched the Hussar, who had been assigned to me to hold my horse, and who was the man who, in the morning, had been posted to watch the river-bed, asked, 'How many lions are there supposed to be here?' I told him 'Only the one we fired at this morning.'

Whereupon he grimly said, 'Oh, I saw him go away up the river when you went down into it. *He was a-dragging his hind-quarters after him.*'

It appeared that the man thought he had been posted to guard against surprise by an enemy, and did not realise that we, being down among the rocks, could not see the lion which was so visible from his look-out place. And so we lost that lion.

But I had better luck another time.

It stands thus recorded in my diary:[1]

'10*th October*. • (To be marked with a red mark when I can get a red pencil.) Jackson and a native "boy" accompanied me scouting this morning; we three started off at 3 A.M. In moving round the hill that overlooks our camp, we saw a match struck high up near the top of the mountain. This one little spark told us a good deal. It showed that the enemy were there; that they were awake and alert (I say "they," because one nigger would not dare to be up there by himself in the dark); and they were aware of our force being at Posselt's (as otherwise they would not be occupying this hill).

'However, they could not see anything of us, as it was then quite dark. And we went farther on among the mountains. In the early morning light we crossed the deep river-bed of the Umchingwe River, and, in doing so, noticed the fresh spoor of a lion in the sand. We went on and had a good look at the enemy's stronghold; and on our way back, as we approached this

[1] Vide *The Matabele Campaign*, 1896, by the writer; published by Methuen & Co.

river-bed, agreed to go quietly, in case the lion should be moving about in it. On looking down over the bank, my heart jumped into my mouth when I saw a grand old brute just walking in behind a bush. Jackson did not see him, but was off his horse as quickly as I was, and ready with his gun: too ready, indeed, for the moment that the lion appeared, walking majestically out from behind the bush that had hidden him, Jackson fired hurriedly, striking the ground under his foot, and, as we afterwards discovered, knocking off one of his claws.

'The lion tossed up his shaggy head and looked at us in dignified surprise. Then I fired and hit him with a leaden bullet from the Lee-Metford. He reeled, sprang round, and staggered a few paces, when Jackson, who was using a Martini-Henry, let him have one in the shoulder. This knocked him over side-ways, and he turned about, growling savagely.

'I could scarcely believe that we had got a lion at last, but resolved to make sure of it; so, telling Jackson not to fire unless it was necessary (for fear of spoiling the skin with the larger bullet of the Martini), I went down closer to the beast and fired a shot at the back of his neck as he turned his head momentarily away from me. The bullet went through his spine and came out through the lower jaw, killing him.

'*We* were pretty delighted at our success, but our nigger was mad with happiness, for a dead lion—provided he is not a man-eater—has many invaluable gifts for a Kaffir, in the shape of love-philtres, charms against disease or injury, and medicines that produce bravery. It was quite delightful to shake hands with the mighty paws of the dead lion, to pull at his magnificent tawny mane, and to look into his great, deep, yellow eyes. Then we set to work to skin him; two of us skinning while the other kept watch in case of the enemy sneaking up to catch us while we were thus occupied. We found that he was very fat, and also that he had been much wounded by porcupines, portions of whose quills had pierced the skin, and lodged in his flesh in several places. Our nigger cut out the eyes, gall-bladder, and various bits of the lion's anatomy, as fetish medicine. I filled my carbine-bucket with some of the fat, as I knew my two "boys," Diamond and M'tini, would very greatly value it. Then, after hiding the head in a neighbouring bush where we could find it again, we packed the skin on to one of the ponies and returned to camp mightily pleased with ourselves.'

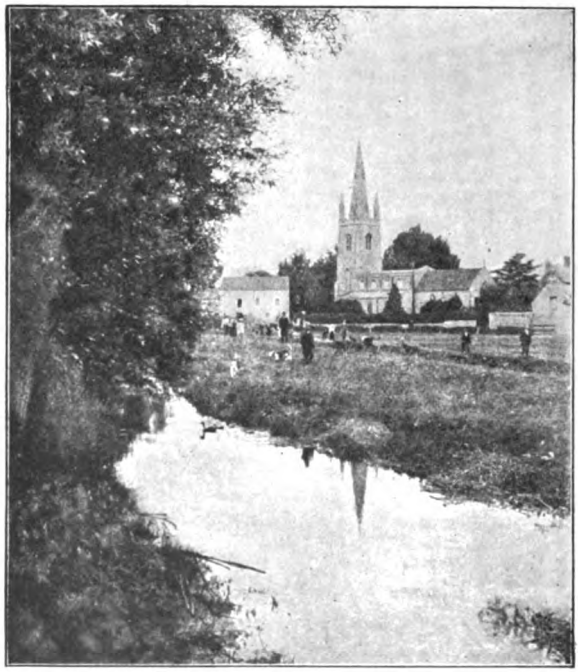
OTTER-HUNTING WITH CYCLE AND CAMERA

BY FRANCES J. ERSKINE

To all those who require mild interest and mild amusement I can strongly recommend this combination of one science, one sport, and one pastime, making a very entertaining and agreeable whole; without much fatigue, without dulness, and not altogether devoid of excitement. Otter-hunting, pure and unadulterated, is more than any but a few enthusiasts can rise to. It entails getting up at some unearthly time in the morning, before either the air or the coffee water is properly warmed, and a rush off, after a crust of bread, or reproachful glances from the cook, routed up before her proper hour, if one has more. Then, as likely as not, the time has run very fine, and one is deluded into short cuts across long grass, dripping with dew, with the result that the would-be otter-hunter is as wet as the prey sought, the only difference being that the otter likes it—as is the nature of the creature—and the hunter does not. In spite of one's exertions, after all the scuffle, and all the fuss, the hounds are late, and there is nothing to do but stamp about in wet boots, which is tiring, or sit on a damp dewy rail, and contract a chill, which is dangerous. Now in cycling with otter-hounds things are considerably improved. It is ten times as easy to ride as to walk, and is a vastly speedier business. If the coffee part of breakfast can be polished off before leaving home, it is a very poor specimen of a cyclist who cannot

spin along at nine or ten miles an hour, munching sandwiches or biscuits *en route*. Then there is the hard high road—no horrid soaking, short cuts; the ride rubs off the last tinge of sleepiness, brings the rider to the meeting place dry, and in a heavenly temper, which is more than the majority of people are in the small hours of the morning.

Taken this way, everything is rose colour. The country never looks so pretty as when the sun is climbing up the sky to the east. The light is excellent for snapshots, and the varied people brighten up bits which would be perfect at any time, but



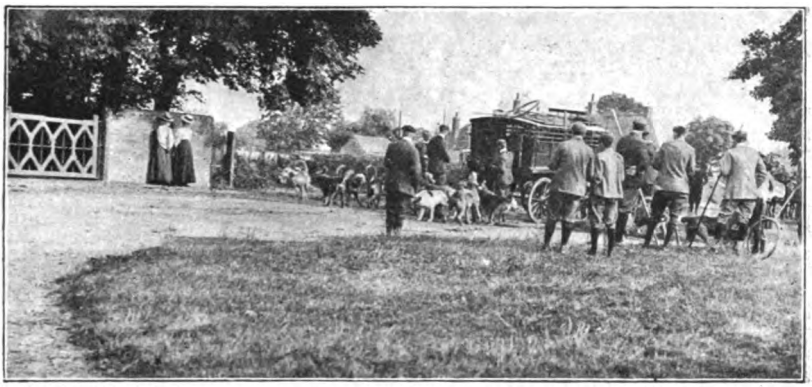
CHIVYING DUCKS

which just want the touch of animation that the hunters supply. There are three bores connected with these three counter-irritants. One is striding for hours through wet grass. A second is having an objectless cycle ride. A third is taking a view with no living figures in the foreground. So the three amusements and the three bores neutralise one another, and the result is a mild but undiluted pleasure.

And then comes the excitement of the sport in which we are to join. The hounds, shut up in a tight-fitting van, give audible

vent to their woes in a chorus of hoots and howls which are distressing to the ears; mingled with this is the shrill, aggrieved yapping of the terrier, a luckless animal doomed to be rattled about in a grated cage under the hound van, whilst the other dogs are having a good time, half in half out of the water, frightening sheep, chivying fowls and ducks, and arousing the wrath of divers cows, whip-cracks and rating forming an accompaniment to their dancing.

Some people come on the van, some come in carts, others stroll up, the majority sporting long poles; not that they all go in the water, but it is *comme il faut*, like a novice's spurs out hunting, or an alpenstock in Switzerland. After a bit the hounds are let out—let out, is it? Pour out, tumble out, starting differences of opinion amongst themselves in mid-air—a barking, yowling,



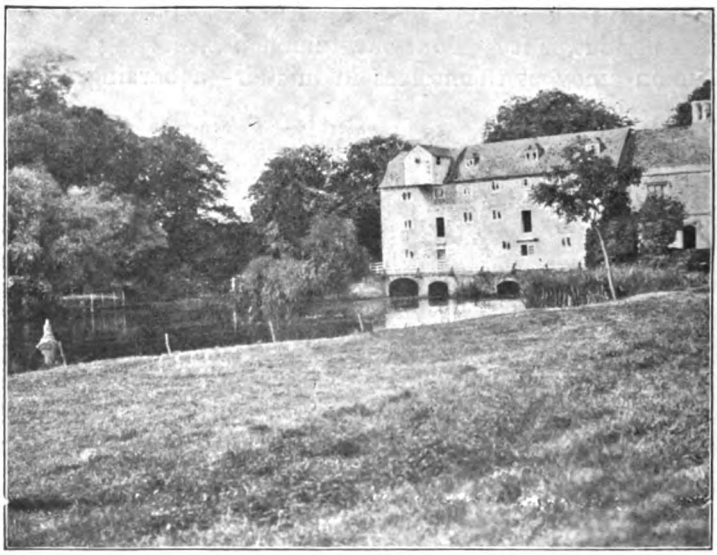
UNCARTING HOUNDS

snapping, snarling, hairy cascade of woolly fur and waving tails which try to embrace the field and are repulsed ungratefully, till at last the whole crew, red-capped otter-men, poles and all, start down to the mill-stream, where, with much flourishing of tails and many half-wailing howls, they set to work.

Off go the hunters along the river-bank. Off go the hound van, cyclists, and carriages along the main road, heading for a bridge a mile up, and guided by the occasional chorus of wailing 'hoo-hoos' which rise from the pack drawing the river-banks. After a bit we forge ahead, and the sounds of the pack come down faintly, now ceasing, now breaking out, with from time to time the twang of the horn, whip-cracks, and a distant burst of shouting over some erring hound.

It is very lovely spinning along over a road like asphalte. It

rained hard the day before, so there is no wind and no dust—only a light, cool air. The sky is flecked with soft clouds, enhancing the beauty of the blue, which shows in large, ragged patches in between. It is flat country; a picturesque ridge of hills rises blue in the distant west, whilst here and there a windmill stretches its sails black and spidery against the sky, and all round are corn-lands varying from light yellow to the deep red gold of fully ripe red wheat, all waving before a light westerly wind, the cloud shadows causing wonderful lights to pass over the yellow surging fields.



A WATER-MILL BY THE ROAD

It is very lonely and very still, the only sound being the distant 'whirr' of a reaper some few fields off. We come to a water-mill, and beside the broad mill-dam are some shady trees, and a stout oak rail fence, against which the cycles are placed in orthodox Hyde Park fashion. One's own saddle is always preferable to a rail when it can be utilised as a seat, and in this case, with a wide-spreading tree acting as parasol, it is the acme of enjoyment to sit and cool, listening to the plash of water over the weir, and wondering what the hunters are doing, and if they are not very hot.

'Hoo, hoo!' remarks a hound close at hand.

There they all come, red caps, serge coats, long poles and all.

Some hounds feel the heat so much that they swim along placidly, while the hunters look as if they would find it pleasant to follow suit. There is no more quiet contemplation of the scenery. What with whip-cracking and shouting, the wailing bay of the hounds, now and again a twang of the horn, things are pretty lively as every corner of the weir and mill-dam are drawn for traces of the otter.

A CHECK

After a while the progress down stream is resumed, till the hunters arrive at a small market town, where every one is on the look out, and the greater number of the population, men, women, children, stray dogs, even an inquisitive cat, congregate by the river-side. But the 'master' hates a crowd; so by a dextrous, if damp, short cut he, the hounds, and followers evade the townsfolk, and finally draw down to a sluice-gate, where the river joins a larger stream. Finally, after a curt confabulation, they retrace their steps. The sun is getting high and uncomfortably warm, and we are not very sorry to turn our faces homewards, the hunters beating as they go.

The otter does not materialise, but there is the consolation to some that a future fixture may bring better luck, though few women care to be in at the final scene. From a cycling photographic view the morning has been perfect, if from the otter-hunters' standpoint it has been a failure. It has been interesting, pleasant, and picturesque. Those who cannot ascend to the required pitch of endurance to walk many miles through heavy grass, might do worse than try a morning of otter-hunting on a bicycle, not forgetting, if the light be good, a light, good hand camera.

THE TAIL OF THE HUNT

BY PERCY STEPHENS

PARADOXICAL as the remark may seem, it has always been a matter of surprise to my humble self that no sporting writer has ever yet attempted to describe the fearful pleasure enjoyed by those who form the rearguard (or, as an Irishman would call it, the tail) of the hunting field; a body whose mere numerical strength, one would imagine, would entitle them to more than mere scornful mention, and in whose ranks some very good sportsmen, if bad or nervous riders, are often to be found. I do not remember to have read the description of a good run with hounds, whether fictitious or presumably veracious, in which the above-mentioned class are ever mentioned except with ignominy or contempt, whilst the heroes of the tale are held up for admiration, as going perfectly straight from start to finish, occasionally, however, in the fictitious narratives, coming to grief at some unsurmountable obstacle, beside which Becher's Brook would be a mere sheep-hurdle, only—lucky dogs!—to be nursed into convalescence by some beautiful heiress, who eventually bestows her hand and fortune upon the happy sufferer; and it is this which leads the uninitiated to write down all fox-hunters as devils of fellows who value their own necks as lightly as they do their horses'.

No doubt this partiality on the part of the sporting scribe is both natural and praiseworthy. Courage or, as we term it, pluck

is probably the quality that men of every race value more highly than any other, and it is the duty almost as much as the privilege of every writer, no matter whether he be the Poet Laureate singing of the Light Brigade at Balaclava, or the gentleman who describes the magnificent run with the Brookside Harriers in the columns of the *Field*, to extol this quality in others; but, none the less, it has always been a matter of surprise to me that no one has ever yet been found to say a good word for those individuals who, less favoured by fortune or nature, habitually bring up the 'tail of the hunt.'

In the first place, it must be borne in mind that lack of courage is not the invariable reason why some of them, at all events, occupy this unenviable position. There is many a good fellow to be found in every hunt in Great Britain who, while he is not only a good horseman but is, in addition, probably a better *sportsman* than many of the hard-riding division, is precluded by lack of means from riding as close to hounds as he would like. The horse he bestrides (frequently a heavy-shouldered grey), though in its own sphere an undoubtedly useful and even valuable animal, is not exactly the sort which one would select to ride straight over a country, and is, in addition, the only one in his stable. It went twice in the dog-cart to the station yesterday, and to-morrow night—this time in the waggonette—will have to take its owner and his wife out to dinner; consequently, in view of possible disablement and contingent inconvenience, has to be ridden with considerable prudence; but as this is the only reason why its master is not found in a more forward place when hounds run hard, it is surely unjust to write him down a coward?

Again, there are others, shy, sensitive men, who, from a variety of causes, were unable to hunt in their youth, are consequently unskilful riders across country, and who are tortured by the fear of the ridicule which a 'voluntary' on their part produces. Several such I have known, men who on other occasions have exhibited when necessary perfectly cool courage, but whose dread of ridicule and derision has weighed so heavily on their nerves as to simply debar them from ever doing themselves justice in the hunting field. This is, I will admit, a most puerile and foolish feeling; but I wonder how many hunting men are *entirely* free from it? These, too, are some of the tail of the hunt, who cannot with absolute fairness be described as 'funkers.'

Then, too, there are some who hunt but never aspire to be

anywhere than at the tail of the hunt, are never expected to be anywhere else, and are never despised for being there. One of them is probably to be found with every pack of hounds in the kingdom, usually a stout middle-aged man, much given to good living, and noted for his talents as a teller of good stories. Good-humoured and overflowing with 'chaff,' he has long occupied the post of jester to the hunt. He merely goes out for the sake of getting enjoyable exercise and meeting his friends, and is seen to most advantage in those countries where large woodlands, and consequent long 'draws,' lend themselves to

JESTER TO THE HUNT

coffee-housing. Although he is in no sense a sportsman, and would not ride at a sheep-hurdle for an earldom, he is none the less a good fellow, popular with all classes, and much in request in country houses; and, somehow or another, although he is a most undoubted 'skirter,' no one ever seems to think any the worse of him for it.

It must be borne in mind that, after all, fox-hunting is not the breakneck amusement that highly coloured sporting articles and prints would have us believe. It is indeed rare for hounds to run so hard in any country that a man cannot, without losing his pride of place, deviate a little from the line to make use of a gap, a gate, or even a friendly bridle-road. No doubt certain districts, such as the 'Shires' and parts of Cheshire and Dorsetshire, are

more conducive to hard riding than others; but even in the cream of high Leicestershire how often does it occur that men who wish to be with hounds are called on to ride perfectly straight across country at the top speed of their horses? and on the very rare occasions that this happens, what percentage of the field does so? A very small one, I trow. A good run with hounds is, to my mind, very like the battle of life: a very few men, specially favoured by nature or fortune, go to the front, and remain there from start to finish; a far larger number achieve, and are content with, a respectable mediocrity. The rest of us, I fear, are never classed as anything but failures, and ought, I suppose, not to expect anything more than that contemptuous pity of our more fortunate brethren which usually falls to our lot.

The late Mr. Surtees (who, I believe, invariably rode there) used to maintain that the tail of the hunt was the place for sport, an expression which is, of course, liable to a double interpretation; but I will defy anyone who is gifted with the slightest sense of the ridiculous, or who is at all an observer of human nature, not to agree with the dictum of the witty author of 'Handley Cross.' True it may be urged that we are not all of us sporting novelists, and that we go a-hunting to hunt and not to note the foibles of our fellow-creatures; but as I will not insult my readers by imagining that they have ever been in such a place before, I am going to provide them with a new experience, and ask them for once to ride with me at the tail of the hunt.

Let us imagine the scene of our operations to be laid neither in Leicestershire nor Berwickshire, but rather in what I may term a fashionable *provincial* country—that is to say, one which, without being considered first-class, is none the less good enough to induce strangers to winter within its gates, and which affords four capital days a week to its supporters; and let us further imagine that a fox has just been found and got safely away with every prospect of affording a run over a good country, that the huntsman and the pack are already away on its line, and that a field of some 150 horsemen and women are struggling for a start. It is instructive to note the various methods they employ for this: some six or seven men choose their own place in a rather forbidding-looking fence, and jump it without hesitation, a score or so string their way one by one over or through a weak place in it, and the rest of the field struggle and crowd through a narrow hunting wicket, a proceeding involving considerable exercise of patience and ingenuity; but at last all get through, and find themselves in an enormous grass enclosure, with the

last of the hard riders just disappearing over its further fence. And now, my friend, I must ask you to remember that to-day you are not to emulate these audacious individuals, but to restrain your own and your horse's ardour, and to follow me to that gate towards which the more cautious of the field are making their way as though riding five furlongs on the flat, for these are the gentry who are 'not afraid of the pace as long as there is no leaping,' and who have to make up the leeway of their more circuitous route by hard galloping. Further, while generally noting the ways and habits of the tail of the hunt, let us attach

STRUGGLE AND CROWD THROUGH A NARROW HUNTING WICKET

our fortunes more particularly to one individual, and for this purpose let us select that quietly got-up man riding the well-bred, if rather heavy, brown horse. You may have noticed him when the hounds found, pulling and hauling at the said quadruped, which was anxious to begin the day with the unwonted luxury of a jump over the first fence, while its master was equally anxious to go through the gate: he is to be found in every hunt in Great Britain, and we will christen him Mr. Tailer.

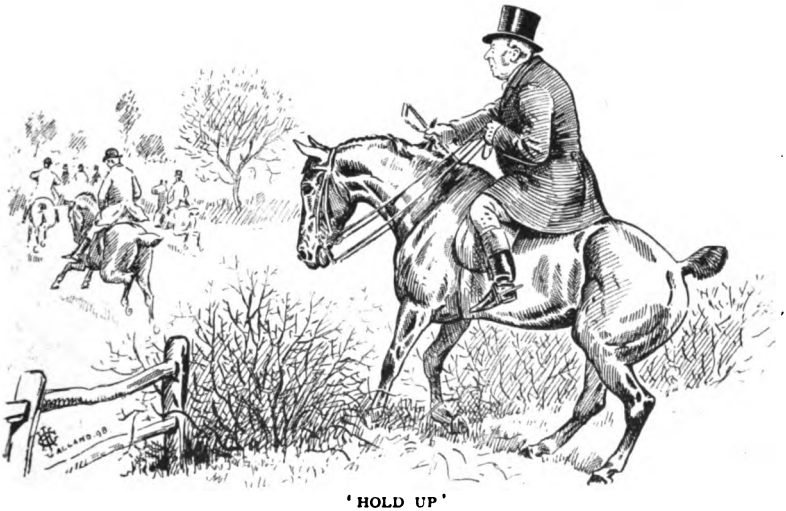
At present he is fairly happy; he has got what for him is a good start, and he knows there is a gate into the next field, and so he adopts a Newmarket seat, and rides boldly for it in company with some fourscore of his compeers. The next field, however, a rather sticky bit of plough, sobers him considerably, as

there is no means of egress except over a fence, 'only a very little one,' it is true, but still a fence; so half-way across the field Tailer pulls his horse into a trot and awaits the development of events, which turn out exactly as he had anticipated. Small as the fence is, a hundred or so of horsemen cannot get over without having some appreciable effect on it, and, sure enough, ere long young Farmer Stiles, on an unclipped four-year-old, goes thundering into the middle of it, and makes a gap through which the thankful Tailer, not without sundry misgivings and repeated objurgations to his horse to 'hold up,' cautiously picks his way. It is nothing to him that when he gets on the other side he cannot even hear hounds, and only knows which way they have gone by following other horsemen; he has got over his first fence, and, with a glow of honest pride, he takes his horse by the head and gallops bravely on to the next fence, where another friendly gate awaits him. Yet another gate, and another gap, surmounted with equal misgivings, and then an unlooked-for piece of good luck occurs, for he catches up the hounds, which are now hunting rather slowly, and an accommodating farm road gives him nearly a mile of safe galloping, not only within hearing but actually within sight of them.

This is indeed glorious, and our friend would ask for no better fun all day; but he knows too well that it is too good to last, and it happens that, after a trifling check, scent improves, and hounds go steaming at a great pace over what he ruefully recognises to be about the stiffest and worst gated part of the country. He almost resolves to make at once for the nearest road to ride with the second horsemen, when at this moment he spies Tom Sleeman heading off at almost a right angle to the line of the hounds. Sleeman is one of those men, more often talked about than met with, who have a natural instinct for venery—or, more colloquially, 'a deal of ret-ketchin' cunnin' about 'em'—and who seem intuitively to know the line a hunted fox will take. Tom generally rides more or less with the tail of the hunt, and yet hounds must run very hard indeed for him not to be up before the worry; he views more foxes and heads fewer than any man in the country, and the huntsman has a friendly regard for him in view of the many times he has helped him to kill a beaten, dodging fox. Tailer justly considers him a most useful adjunct to the hunting field, and would never leave him, for he knows every gate, gap, and bridle-road in the country, were it not for his abominable—in our friend's eyes—practice of jumping big places if driven to it, and more than once this objectionable

habit has left poor Tailer lamenting on the wrong side of a fence, with 'eternal misery on this side and certain death on the other.'

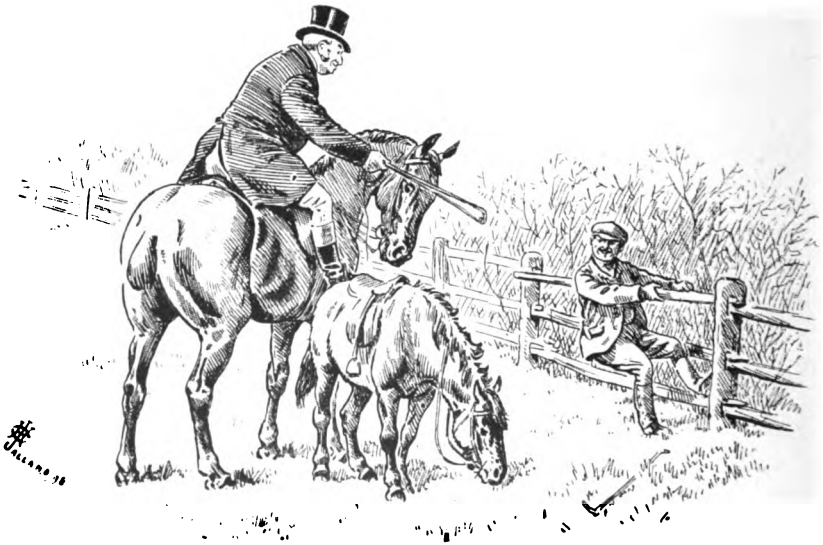
However, on this occasion it is a question of Hobson's choice, and so he throws in his lot with Sleeman, and for a time all goes very smoothly, though they hear little and see less of hounds, until they find themselves in a field out of which there is no egress except over a most forbidding-looking thorn fence made up with post and rails, over which that abominable Sleeman disappears, merely shouting out to our friend—whose foibles he knows wells—that hounds are probably making for Didlington. For a moment Tailer is thoroughly nonplussed; it is too hard to be left like this just when he was getting on so well and enjoying



'HOLD UP'

his hunt so much, and he eyes the fence, which is really a nasty place, with much irresolute disgust, when a *deus ex machinâ* appears in the shape of a very small boy riding a shaggy pony. Professing much concern on the new-comer's behalf, the crafty Tailer induces him to dismount and pull down a couple of rails, by which the size of the obstacle is reduced at least half. Even then it is a great deal bigger than he likes, but he hardens his heart and gets safely over, while his small ally somehow scrambles through in the usual miraculous way of small boys and their ponies. The very next fence, however, proves altogether too much for our friend's nerves, nor is it reducible by the simple process employed at the last one, and so with a sigh he turns his horse's head and makes for the road, which he recognises too late

he should never have left. Once on it, Tailer gallops away down wind, occasionally pulling up as he mistakes the bark of a sheep-dog for the note of a hound or fancies he hears the sound of the horn, until at last patience is rewarded by his catching sight in the distance of some bobbing spots of scarlet, and by the aid of a convenient lane is fast catching them up, when a shrill 'Who whoop!' proclaiming that all is over and that a stout-hearted fox has met its legitimate death, comes down wind to him. This has exactly a contrary effect on Tailer from what it would on most sportsmen: it actually makes him ride harder now that the run is finished than when it was in progress; he even jumps a small



THE SIZE OF THE OBSTACLE IS REDUCED

fence without looking to see what is on the other side, and by dint of this and much hard galloping contrives to arrive at the scene of the kill ere Reveller and Rantipole his son have entirely ceased growling over a hind leg.

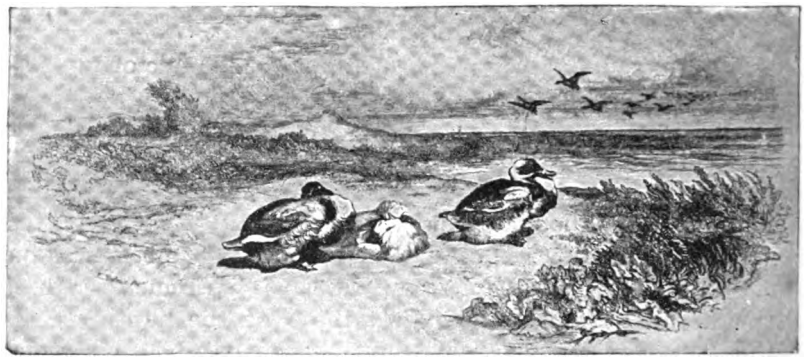
Tailer is perfectly contented now; true he would have liked to have been up to see the kill, but none the less he has really enjoyed his day. He saw the fox found and eaten—that is more than he often manages to do—and as he lights his cigar and turns for home is every bit as well pleased with himself as the Hon. Crasher, who went in front from first to last, and 'got through' two horses in the process.

And now I fancy I hear my impatient readers ask: 'To what

does all this tend, and why have you inflicted this tale of funking and skirting and macadamising upon us? You surely cannot hold up the man you have described as an example for others to follow, or expect us to have any respect for him? Again we repeat *à quoi bon?*—and I can only throw myself upon the mercy of the court, and admit that, although I may have purposely exaggerated his failings, my hero deserves all the epithets you have bestowed on him. But at the same time I would have you remember that, after all, these failings are merely those of the hunting field, and that in private life Tailer is probably as cool and courageous a man as needs be; indeed, I have seen the very man I have in my mind's eye, when writing this article, standing up to the swiftest bowling on a fiery wicket, and getting knocked about all over his head and body without flinching a bit; it is only when he is put on a horse to gallop across country that his nerve fails him. The question, then, naturally presents itself, *Que diable allait-il faire dans cette galère?*—why the deuce does he go out hunting?

To this I can give a perfectly straightforward answer—*because he likes it.* He goes out to hunt in his own way, and enjoys that way as much as the hardest rider does *his. Il ne cherche pas ses émotions à se casser le cou,* as the Frenchman remarked—but he thoroughly enjoys all the rest of it, down to the very mud splashes on his top boots, as Whyte-Melville puts it.

In other respects he sins against no canon of hunting law: he subscribes his due to the hunt fund; he heads no more foxes and rides over no more wheat or seeds than you or I, gentle reader; he is at heart a sportsman, if a bad or timid rider; he is, whatever his failings, a zealous supporter of our noblest national sport, and on this account alone, if on no other, I venture to crave a little consideration for him at the hands of his harder riding brethren who are inclined to scorn the tail of the hunt.



GOLFERS: SOME MORTALS AND THE GAME OF CROQUET

BY LEONARD B. WILLIAMS

MR. HORACE HUTCHINSON tells a story of some indignant cricketer who referred to the royal and ancient game of golf as 'that damned Scotch croquet.' The remark, insulting as it undoubtedly is to both these games, reveals in the person who uttered it a degree of insight almost commensurate with his vituperative power, for the points of resemblance between golf and croquet are numerous and interesting, and are by no means restricted to their obvious external similarities. Both are said to be descended from a game called 'Pall Mall,' though with regard to croquet this is extremely doubtful; and in the case of golf, he would be a bold man who would positively ascribe to anything Scotch an ancestry so recent as a paltry couple of centuries.

Although both games have been known in their present form for a considerable time, neither seemed to take any serious hold of English people until within the last six or seven years. This period has witnessed a spread of golf not only in this country, but also in Scotland, which is quite as phenomenal as the bicycle craze. The recrudescence of croquet during the latter part of the same period is very striking, and is to be traced largely to the influence of golf. Both are games which can be enjoyed by all adult ages and both sexes, and neither of them demands either great muscular power or violent exertion. The whirligig of time brings his revenges. As lawn tennis killed the old croquet, so golf has killed tennis, and the Zeitgeist created by golf has

smiled upon the rejuvenescence of croquet. Tennis killed the old croquet because tennis was a game, and the old croquet, as played on ninety-nine lawns out of a hundred, was not a game at all; it was a pastime used as an excuse partly for flirtation, largely for the exhibition of bad temper, at which it was considered very amusing to cheat. Tennis held its own for a long time, but it soon became evident that it was a game, like cricket and football, at which 'youth will be served.' To enter the lists at all, you must be strong and active, and prepared for somewhat violent exertion.

Ladies gradually gave it up, and those of us who had arrived at the time when the hair begins to thin, would only play surreptiously, in private gardens, with opponents of our own calibre and no onlookers. Even then we did not enjoy it, for sitting on the net was the mocking fiend, who reminded us that our galumphings were really only a species of vicarious medication, reluctantly undertaken in obedience to our doctor's orders.

'More exercise and less food' was his invariable formula; advice which received point and sting from our tailor's annual, sinister congratulations upon the 'improvement' in the size of our waists. Indeed, the very 'forty-fifteen' which we were wont to cry in stentorian tones served only to recall the respective ages of ourselves and our eldest sons—those sons whom we knew in our heart of hearts would beat our heads off if ever we were foolish enough to engage one of them in a single.

Oh, those youngsters! 'Give us,' we cried to Artemis, 'give us an outdoor game which we may play with credit and self-respect though our hair be grizzling, a game in which, as in billiards and whist, we may still retain our ascendency over these young ones, a game at which we may still excel, though we be middle-aged and scant of breath.'

The introduction of golf was the answer to this cry, and a very satisfactory answer it was.

It fulfils all the requirements of the ideal game. It gives its votaries fresh air and exercise without any violent exertion. It ensures freedom from business worries during the whole day; for who can remember the length of a greengrocer's bill when, by holing his approach shot on the last green, he has finished his round in ninety; or where is the man who can stop to consider such a trifle as his overdraft at the bank, when worried by his stupidity in missing that short putt which lost him the match? The demands made by the literature of the game ensure some variety from the *Law Times* or the *Financial News*. As a

topic of conversation, it shares with bicycling the merit of having disestablished the weather, and it has the advantage over the latter of enabling us to tell our little anecdotal fictions to the sympathetic listener without the fear of exposure at the hands of the female members of the family.

Finally, it is a game in which if, after all, youth does tell, there are nevertheless strong compensatory elements on the side of age and experience. The full swing and consequent long ball are often allied to an untrained and over-sensitive nervous system, readily depressed by small reverses, easily elated to carelessness by the fickle smiles of fortune. On the other hand, the tee-shot that never rises above mediocrity is seldom observed to fall below it (into the bunker, as Mr. Hutchinson has it). It is moderate, but it is always to be depended upon; the approaches are accurate, if a trifle laborious, and the putting, if not deadly, seldom exceeds the statutory 'two' on the green. The game, in fact, demands those qualities which characterise its progenitors—painstaking, patient, 'dour;' qualities which have placed Scotsmen in the van in every field of civilised endeavour, and are found in the sanguine Englishman only as the result of age, training, and experience.

The spread of golf into England revolutionised many things. It transfigured the middle-aged citizen from the dull-eyed and pasty-faced obesity of sedentary life to the hale and hearty proportions of active maturity. The improvement in his temper was silently and gratefully recognised by Mrs. Jones, who is now no longer afraid to ask for an occasional new bonnet for herself and fresh 'jaegers' for the children. Mr. R. C. Lehmann, in an article deploring the decline of boating, declares that the introduction of golf is seriously threatening the deportment of the average Englishman; that Jones, on his way to his office or his club, may be seen to lower his shoulders, buckle in his knees and flourish his umbrella, which he grasps near the ferule, in a manner partly idiotic, partly maniacal. These symptoms, serious as they are, belong, however, to the acute stage only, and rapidly disappear as the patient's handicap approaches a single figure. Mr. Lehmann may take comfort, Jones's deportment is not in any serious danger.

One of the greatest changes effected by golf is to be found on the lawns of country houses and the grass-plots of suburban villas. Where the lawn-tennis net once reigned supreme, there now appears to be either a howling wilderness or else an array of articles which, on examination, prove to be croquet hoops. The wilderness is, however, really relieved by the presence of at least

one 4-inch flower-pot, let into the ground, and possibly by the presence of a captive ball. These do not remain long; and if they are not superseded by the croquet hoops, they fall into melancholy desuetude, for 'putting' on your own lawn is not serious 'putting.' You have often wondered how Smith manages to hit the ball at all with that extraordinary style of his, and you think you will try to see how he does it. Having taken a stance which jeopardises important anatomical structures, you compel your back and shoulders into positions which a contortionist might envy, and, clutching the club with both hands at the junction of metal and wood, you essay a putt of two yards. The ball travels without the slightest deviation, and goes into the hole with the contented air of one who murmurs *O si sic semper!* You are thus betrayed into further practice, *à la* Smith, and when you have recovered from your temporary insanity you are surprised to find that neither in your own nor Smith's nor any other style can you hole a putt of six inches! No, 'putting' is a serious business, and you are quite adequately punished if you bring it home or take liberties with it!

And that captive ball! A friend whose handicap is plus one at, say, Hoylake, was staying with me, and I walked him over to lunch with a neighbour who justly prided himself upon his house, gardens, and their contents. After lunch we went to examine the latter, and on a corner of a lawn we saw what proved to be a captive ball. Radiating from it in all directions, as spokes from a hub, were deep furrows in the earth, and unreplaced divots sprinkled the surrounding sward, uncompromising evidences of the futility of our host's attacks upon it. It had been there about six weeks, and had apparently never been hit at all. My golfing friend had heard of such a thing, but had never seen one, and he was accordingly asked to test it. This he did, striking it clean with a full swing. The elastic broke and the ball headed straight for the drawing-room. Entering at the open window, it went round the room, picking off the choicest pieces of china, smashing the glasses of the most priceless pictures, and finally terminated its mad career by imbedding itself, with a rattle and a thud, in the bureau at which our hostess was writing.

As with putting and driving, so with approaching. Our most perfect iron shots find their resting places either on the dining-room table when laid for dinner or in the baby's perambulator, and we conclude that golf is for the links, and that there, and there only, is the goddess to be wooed with anything like impunity.

It happens in this way that the lawn is no longer utilised. Tennis is disestablished and golf is relegated to the links. Jones comes back one day from business to find his children playing what they are pleased to call croquet. It is an hour and a half to dinner, and it is not worth while changing for a spin on the bicycle, so he takes a mallet and tries his hand. This goes on evening after evening for some time, till at last there comes a man who really plays the game. Jones is introduced to its difficulties, its possibilities, the finesse of its tactics. He practises assiduously, and becomes a keen player. He finds it no longer difficult to put in his hour and a half before dinner, and very soon awakens to the fact that he has discovered a new pleasure in life.

The game shares with golf the merit of being one at which an elder may hold his own. If a youngster wins at croquet, it is on his merits as a player, and not merely because he is young. Indeed age, or at least maturity, is here a distinct advantage. The trained nerve, the absence of liability to fall into those subtle temptations in which the game abounds, the knowledge not only of tactics, but also of human nature, which are the peculiar property of the experienced, are really essential to anything like consistent successful play.

Mr. Garden O. Smith, in a former number of the *Badminton Magazine*, chats to us very delightfully on 'Golf and Character.' 'In the ordinary affairs of business and society,' he says, 'men go about wearing a conventional mask, so that the weakness and strength of their natures are often hid even from themselves. On the Golf Green, under the stress of a tight match, these masks are thrown aside, and we see our own and our neighbours' real natures in all their nakedness. Even his actions and movements are significant, not only of the golfer's present state of mind, but of his character and temperament.' How true is all this, not only of golf, but to an even greater degree of croquet! Nowhere so much as on the croquet ground are the restraints imposed by the exigencies of civilised society so apt to be loosened —nay, to be cast entirely aside. It is recorded of a lady, then no longer in her first youth, that on being defeated in a public tournament, she sat down in the middle of the court before a large number of spectators and 'blubbered like a two-year-old.' We are told that a 'gentleman,' a disputed point having been given against him, threw his mallet over the pavilion and swore that the umpire and referee were both in league with his opponent, that they desired to effect his defeat by foul means, seeing that

it could not be compassed by fair. It is doubtful whether anything drawn from golf can equal these for exhibition of uncontrolled primal passions.

A further resemblance between golf and croquet is to be found in the facilities which, under ordinary circumstances, they both afford for cheating, facilities of which some players habitually avail themselves.

The student of ethics and psychology tells us that the moral tone in women, save only in one particular, is low; that the exceptionally high standard demanded in this particular has its compensation in the general laxity permitted in other matters, and that cheating, even at cards, is, in women, a peccadillo which must not be taken seriously.

Some men conform to the moral code which is demanded of them only because they must; and if their standard is low, it is merely because much is habitually forgiven them. It is only when such a man finds that he can cheat with impunity that he does so 'vigorously and with *aplomb*;' his first excursions are probably diffident and tentative.

The cynic declares that we like women and millionaires for the same reason—for what we can get out of them. I do not know how this may be; but it is an indisputable fact that we overlook in them, and in them only, things which, if committed by any ordinary person, would be followed by punishment swift and condign.

Sydney Smith divided humanity into three classes—men, women, and clergymen. To this classification we may add a fourth—men, women, clergymen, and millionaires.

In view of the considerations already referred to, it is not surprising to find that of those who are credited with a readiness to seize every opportunity of taking an unfair advantage of opponents at games, ninety-nine per cent. are to be found in classes two and four—women and millionaires.

I am glad to say that as far as croquet is concerned I have seen very little cheating among women. The only person whom I have ever known to cheat consistently and with confidence was a *nouveau riche*, who bore a reputation for rigid probity in his business relations, but who exhibited at croquet a want of principle as clumsy as it was shameless.

At golf the person whose 'etiquette' is lax very soon finds that the other members of his club are always engaged, and Colonel Bogey his only opponent. If he should compete for a medal, he is usually sent out late, and quite a keen interest in his

round is suddenly developed by at least one member of the committee. He is thus rendered harmless. At croquet such a person is a terrible nuisance. You only meet him at tournaments, and must either scratch to him or play against him. If you decide to do the former, he is merely passed on to some victim less able to cope with his eccentricities than you may be, and—horrid thought—he concludes that you are afraid of him, for your ethical Chesterfield has a high opinion of his game. If you play with him you have to ask a friend to come and act as umpire in an uninteresting match, when Willis and Carter, on a distant court, are playing what will prove the tie for the gold medal. It is true the reception accorded him by the other players is always of the chilliest, and this may eventually induce him to abandon prize meetings in favour of private matches with opponents of his own moral calibre. In the meantime he constitutes the one irremediable blot upon the aspect of a delightful game, and the one serious drawback in the many social pleasures of a tournament meeting.

CAMELS

BY ROSALIND CHAMBERS

'E's a devil an' an ostrich an' a orphan-child in one.

IT is still the habit in many English villages to bless a person who sneezes, which is an ancient custom traced back by Rabbinical traditions to Jacob. The East has many legends connected with sneezes, and one of them tells us that Noah, being much troubled by mice in the Ark, tickled the lion's nose, whose royal sneeze produced a cat. The Bedouins still believe that Adam's was productive of a horse. Like many a nag of the present day, it was no better than it ought to be, for it grumbled that it was hollow-backed, its feet too small, and its neck too short. Thereupon Providence created a camel, and the horse shied at the monstrosity, as his descendants continue to do unto this day. Who can blame them? Even Rudyard Kipling, loth as he is to speak ill of any animal, confesses that he 'smells most awful vile;' while Burton goes further, calling him an 'unsavoury beast, which eats perfume and breathes fetor,' and I myself must own that anything that has once touched a camel can never be wholly dissociated from him. The Germans are rude enough to use him as a term of contempt, as we use the ass, and the French the turkey.

Yet, in spite of all, camels possess a fascination that I never get over, and I can stand contentedly for hours in a filthy caravansary watching and studying their different characteristics. It is said that a camel has never been properly painted: the calm superiority, the intense cynicism, the constant turning of the long, flat, but swan-like neck, and incessant quivering of the mobile lips and nostrils, the unfathomable depth of the liquid velvet eyes, veiled by heavy lashes three inches long, the small, round ears set unusually low down, and almost hidden in tufts of warm brown

fluff, the tucked-up quarters and general falling-off behind, all combine towards difficulties that will only be surmounted when a Madame Bonheur for camels arises. They move, like an American trotter, by advancing the fore and hind foot of each side at the same time, bringing the hind foot at least eighteen inches beyond the front one on the outside, for which purpose their hind legs are appallingly cow-hocked. When a running camel settles into his stride, he stretches out, bringing himself nearer to the ground, and his great splay feet seem to be all over the place at once. Mules and horses are trained to it; it is called 'pacing,' and is taught by tying the front leg to the hind with bands of halfa

BAGGAGE CAMEL

until they have acquired the habit; it is a very easy motion to the rider, and can be kept up for forty or fifty miles a day. You sit loosely swinging your legs against the ribs, which soon becomes as much a habit to you as holding the reins, but at first makes your unaccustomed calves so tender that you can hardly bear to put your stockings on. 'Keep it up,' said an Arab once to me; 'for thus will your horse run like a railway train, or at least as fast as a mule.'

No animals vary so much as camels or contain such an accumulated past, and they gaze at you with the superiority of the

most blue-blooded aristocrats—that is, at least, if they condescend to let you look at them at all, as they are very highly strung and object to familiarity, especially from a foreigner; for being Easterns, they know that it is blue eyes which cast the evil eye. Therefore, as soon as you approach, they generally get up in undisguised disgust and hobble away. They either lie down again some way off or stand with their backs to you on three legs, the fourth being doubled back against the fore-arm, and bound with a bit of esparto grass.

To become properly acquainted with them, you must be intro-

NOMADS ON THE MARCH

duced to them in their native desert; there they are thoroughly at home, and glide noiselessly along the surface of the dry, loose sand, while horses and mules are sinking in up to their hocks. The ordinary baggage camel travels at the rate of two and a half miles an hour, wandering hither and thither as he likes, snatching a stalk here and a tuft there of the sweet aromatic desert scrub; considering the immense stride he has, this is extraordinarily slow, but nothing in the world would persuade him to hurry himself or to walk straight in any direction whatsoever. He will go his own way or not at all, and if you endeavour to make him change his

mind, he will, after looking at you for some time with withering contempt, roar aloud to his brethren to tell them what new-fangled insanities you are in favour of. Yet he has much sense; all the time you are loading him he watches you carefully out of the tail of his eye, and if you put anything on to him larger (weight he cares less about) than he is accustomed to, he will grumble and wail unceasingly.

If an Arab wishes a dromedary to lie down, he seizes it by the beard, crying, 'Ikh, Ikh!' but it is useless for you to attempt to do it, as no European throat can render the words sufficiently guttural. To make him rise, it is enough to take off the rope at the knee that keeps the foot up to the shoulder, and give him a crack on his haunches; this latter is generally unnecessary, for dromedaries are much more willing to get up than to lie down. To do so, they

A DESERT WELL

first raise themselves on to the callosities at the point of the joint between the hock and the hip; here they have a habit of remaining while they hold some conversation, and you are poised aloft at an angle of forty-five degrees; but just as you are getting accustomed to it, they hoist their fore-quarters up, standing on their knees; another awful upheaval makes them stand on their hind feet, and they then tardily finish in front, stalking quietly away as if they had not shaken you about at all. They walk delicately, like Agag, much after the fashion of the knock-kneed æsthete of some years ago. No reins or headpiece being there, the Arabs often steer them by using the tail as a rudder, which may account for the Naval Brigade having been so particularly successful in managing them during the Egyptian war. They

play less in their youth than any other animal, and begin the business of life early, trudging along by their mammas from the time that they are a few days old; they do not carry loads until they have seen three summers, and are said to work for about thirty years. When surrounded by plenty, camels are watered every three days, but have food regularly and systematically. In Africa they are generally fed on black oats and straw, but in Asia Minor balls of damper are thrown down their throats; sticks with thorns three inches long are a holiday to them, and date-stones fatten them. The flesh can be eaten, the milk drunk (it does not give you dysentery if you are accustomed to it), the hair makes clothes, the skin forms bottles, the dung provides fuel, the bones keep evil spirits away. Can as much be claimed for any other animal?

A WRECK IN THE DESERT

When seen singly, a camel is ugly, three-cornered, badly put together, and shockingly out of drawing; but when a large herd is bearing down upon you 'with their silly necks a-bobbin' like a basketful of snakes,' they look exactly like a flock of ostriches, and anyone who has ever got into the midst of them on a bicycle will never forget it.

The old story of the Arab slaying his camel for the sake of the water contained in his paunch is, I should fancy, rather mythical, for at the best of times it only holds about a gallon and a half, and by the time that the man is dying of thirst there cannot be very much left in the reservoir. This consists of small

cells arranged in rows one below the other like a pigeon-cote. Camel's blood, like man's, has oval corpuscles. As far east as India, and west as Algeria, fossils of them have been found, while the sculptures of Assyria testify to the forms extant at that period.

I am inclined to consider them a musical race, for they have so many different ways of expressing themselves, but most of them, I regret to state, are for purposes of complaint. They have

PALANQUIN OF A KHALIFA'S WIFE

a soft grumble rising to a wail of remonstrance when you are loading them, a growl when another approaches too near, a strident shout if things are going very wrong, and a soft purr when their food is coming; mothers call their little ones by a goat-like note, and there is also the disgusting hubble-bubble of the male when he throws his stomach suddenly out through the side of his mouth. Correctly speaking, camels have two humps

and dromedaries one, but there is no necessity to be pedantic in this world.

No epithet was ever more appropriately placed than 'the ship of the desert.' Camels come floating up behind you like a sailing vessel in a gentle breeze, and have that same poetical effect of arriving from you know not where and going you know not whither. When weary of this world the camel lays himself down to die where he is, the sand for a grave, the sky for a canopy; the sun-bleached bones lie there, the ribs are as the ribs of a ship, the keel still connects them, the rudder lies by the side, the bows stand out to sea. A wreck, whether it be a ship of the desert or the ocean, is the loneliest sight I know.

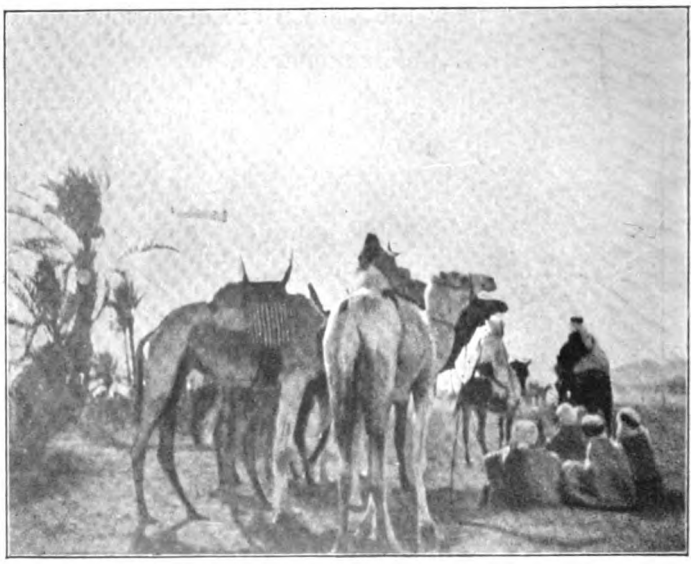
Camel palanquins for the women are of various styles, the

BAGGAGE CAMELS

poor people's being like a large round hen-coop with a curtain or two over it, which combines the double purpose of a shield from the sun and the eye of man. When not thus in use, they are kept on the roof of the house and serve as clothes-props on washing-days. The great lady has an elaborate one like a hammock slung lengthways across the camel's hump, which sways as the animal walks after the manner of a swing-table at sea, and you can hardly feel whether it is moving or standing still. It is long enough for a woman to lie down full length in, and has exquisite rugs with embroidered cushions; outside it is draped with curtains and scarves arranged in fancy patterns, between which the woman, though invisible, can see plainly out, and the breeze comes in as freely as through the leaves of a tree.

Long strings of heavily tasselled, brilliantly coloured wools hang down almost to the ground, and the palest and handsomest camels are invariably reserved for the harem. When marching, they look like a yacht with her spinaker set running before the wind; only sails, boat, &c. are all of rich, harmonious colours.

But unless you are an Eastern, to whom time is no object whatever, for a long distance you will provide yourself with a Mehari, or fleet camel, who can cover 150 miles in a night and be none the worse for it, though his appearance while doing it will be between that of a giraffe and a turkey-hen. Instead of a roomy pack, where you can sit anywhere and anyhow, for this



RACING CAMELS

thoroughbred you will have a racing saddle of tamarisk wood, exactly the size and shape of a breakfast plate, covered tightly with shiny leather, having a small support at the back a foot high, and a slightly taller one in front with a cross-piece a few inches long. With one hand you grasp this handle-bar, the other holds the brake, which is a string of camel's hair attached to a wire ring in one nostril. Instead of pedals, you cross your feet on the neck—if you can reach it; but personally my legs are too short. Camels dislike the smell of a European, and if they have not carried one before, they are apt to run away when one first gets up. In any case it is well to sit tight, for they move much more

rapidly than the cocktails, and you find yourself suddenly in mid-air, looking into the balconies, with nothing in front of you except, on a level with the soles of your feet, the tip of a muzzle pointed superciliously towards the heavens; this appears to be quite loose and unattached, wobbling aimlessly from side to side as the great soft eyes see objects which alarm. To urge them faster, you pull your one rein, guiding them with your toes; but you probably do not find that out until they have carried you through the branches of a pepper-tree. The motion is always said to make you sea-sick, but I never found it do so, though I am an abominably bad sailor. The sort of halt between each step that throws your body forward certainly gives you a headache, but you soon get over it, especially if you loll on the haunches in the native fashion.

In North Africa baggage dromedaries travel loose, and up-country you may meet a herd of several hundred together. In Asia Minor they are invariably attached, and walk one behind the other with a little donkey as leader, the last carrying a bell. This one's head is tied to the tail of the one preceding him, and so on through the string, which seldom exceeds six or seven. Like date-palms, the sea does not seem to agree with them, for the further up-country you go the finer they are, and the long fluffy hair and solemn movements make them very different from the shabby Egyptian specimens which Punch's young lady not unnaturally mistook for second-hand ones. Seventy thousand camel-loads of dates come into Smyrna some autumns, besides those brought down by the railway, and there is an enormous market for them, which is not used at any other time of the year.

The Turcomans of Anatolia get up matches and fight them, but great care has to be taken to bind the mouths securely, or they would tear each other to pieces, and to tie the tails to the pack-saddle, for they are sharp at the sides and cut like a sword. Fights can only take place in the winter, and are rare, as the beasts are very apt to injure each other. The ones I saw were in a Khan paved with cobble stones and a heap of metal rails at the side, over which one of the vanquished ones was hotly pursued, while crowds of natives stood excitedly by shouting 'Mashallah!' (God preserve him!) in breathless excitement.

Two males are led past a female and brought from opposite sides towards each other. Properly speaking, it is more of a wrestling match, for the object is to throw the other. To do this each beast tries to put his neck across the other one's neck, pushing against his shoulder, and pecking with his great, strong

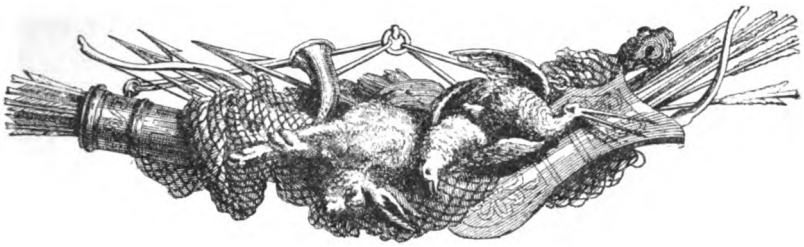
lips (he would use his teeth if not muzzled) at the opposite fore-foot; if he can make his adversary lift that the weight on the opposite side throws him, and the winner kneels triumphantly down on his head. But, like Englishmen, camels do not always know when they are beaten, and sometimes, even thus handicapped, make good their escape, coming pluckily up to the scratch again. Size seems to have very little to do with it, for the champion of our tournament was a small mangey beast who looked as if he would not have the remotest chance with any of the stalwart ones he encountered, yet he went successfully through the lists, winning every bout. Certainly he was full of guile, constantly feigning to be about to do one thing while preparing for another, even simulating fear and flight, but never

A WRESTLING CAMEL OF ANATOLIA

for one instant forgetting to keep his head tight against the shoulder, so that his adversary could not cross his neck.

I believe Asia Minor is unique as regards camel-fights, for I have never read of one anywhere else. The Turcomans told me that they also get up fights between their rams, which are magnificent specimens, with the thick, flat tail of the Asiatic sheep, that has penetrated across Africa as far as Tunisia, but is unknown in Algeria. It is the *bonne bouche* of the beast when roasted, and is certainly excellent if you do not object to fat.

We have had the boxing kangaroo, the cycling lion, the talking horse, and the comedian collies, so doubtless we shall soon have the wrestling camels in London.



NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

In the last issue I wrote of the St. Leger, 'Jeddah may win, but if he does I think it will be because the others are either very bad or resolutely indisposed to gallop.' He did not win, as history records, but what excuse is to be made for him I have no idea. I saw him canter at about half-past six on the Leger morning, and certainly did not think that he went short, nor I fancy did Watts, who rode him; at least it struck me that Watts looked perfectly well satisfied with the state of affairs when he said good-morning as he walked his horse back and passed me after the canter. I am certain that Captain Greer was pleasantly surprised at the result. He had told me he thought Wildfowler was sure to run into a place, but was not good enough to win. Disraeli went quite kindly, but he had gone very short in the preliminary canter, and did not at all surprise his friends when his leg gave way. He had strained a tendon, and been stopped in his work at a critical period before the race; whether he will stand another preparation is doubtful. Fit and well he must have beaten Wildfowler, as he did in the Two Thousand Guineas and also in the Middle Park Plate, in which latter race, when not within many pounds of his form, and very injudiciously ridden moreover, he gave Wildfowler 3 lb. and finished in front of him.

The worst of it is that the bad three-year-olds are supplemented by a crop of very bad two-year-olds. Flying Fox is just a shade better than Musa it appears, and there can be little to choose between Musa, Desmond, Mark For'ard, Eventail (who evidently does not stay), St. Gris, Trident, and half a dozen others. Nothing 'stands out,' and when one finds a lot of animals that cannot be separated, experience shows that they are all bad. The

maker of the Free Handicap for two-year-olds must be having a perplexing time of it just about the period this Note is written. Nor do I hear of anything coming out of which much is expected. The truth is that for several years past we have had, on the whole, a collection of very bad horses in training, and one result of this—inevitable, I suppose—is that the few that have come notably to the front have had their capacity greatly overrated. The Middle Park Plate will just be over when this number is published, but if Flying Fox is beaten the feat will not say a great deal for the victor.

Admirers of the Arab horse, about whom there has lately been some correspondence, have a simple method of proving whether their faith in him is justified, and it would be much more convincing to put the matter to the test than to write accounts of what he could do. That method is to enter an Arab for the Goodwood Cup, wherein he certainly would not be likely to have much to beat. He would receive an allowance of 28 lb., though if the enthusiasts who produced him believed in his merits, they might declare overweight, and so meet their English rivals on equal terms. We are now told that Asil, who in receipt of 4 st. 7 lb. was hopelessly beaten by so bad a horse as Iambic over the last three miles of the Beacon Course, was not really a good representative of the Arab. Before that match we were assured that he was, and that even over such a distance it was absurd for Iambic to try and give away such a little ton of weight; but 'in a canter by twenty lengths' was the verdict. If Asil was not a fair specimen of the Arab, however, let his eulogists find something that is, and if they do not care to wait for the Goodwood Cup, he could be entered for other races, or a match could be easily arranged. Demonstration is infinitely more effective than any amount of argument.

Perhaps it is the publication of my book, 'The Turf,' that has led to my receiving an exceptional number of letters on the subject of betting, for the most part asking in various ways for advice. I really have nothing new to say about the backing of horses; but it will answer my correspondents generally if I repeat some advice given several years ago when similar questions were propounded. 'What then,' I said at the time, 'should be done

by the racegoer who likes to feel some greater interest in the race than the mere spectacle of the struggle can afford? There is something to be said for the plan of supporting favourites; because a horse is not likely to obtain that favouritism unless it has done good work at home, and commanded the confidence of its stable. Favourites are, of course, made and worked up in the market on occasion for deceptive reasons; but, as a rule, to "follow the money" is judicious. The searcher for winners will also probably have found that one or two of the sporting "prophets" write with knowledge and judgment. Some of them, on the other hand, do not; but he must take pains to find those who do, and note the advice. It will be well for him perhaps, furthermore, to follow "the book," and make himself acquainted with the form of the horse he is inclined to fancy; he should also consider whether it belongs to a stable that is worthy of confidence, presided over by an efficient trainer, and whether the jockey is a master of his craft. If he knows anything of horses, he should then carefully look it over in the paddock, and during its preliminary canter, noting also how it goes in the market. Having done all this, and convinced himself that the horse is likely to win, he will be in a position to advise his friends—men on a racecourse usually take any advice that is confidently offered from any quarter—to back the animal. He had better not do so himself, as there are numerous chances against him of which he can know nothing. Should they take his advice and win, he can congratulate himself on the benefit he has conferred; should they not show faith pecuniarily, he can reproach them with their folly in missing the good thing; while, should they lose, he will have no difficulty in finding numerous reasons to show that the defeat is an unexampled piece of bad luck, which, however, on the whole, rather vindicates his judgment than otherwise.' These were my ideas some years since, and they have in no way altered.

The cricket season of 1898 has been in some respects peculiar. One feature of it was that a remarkable bowler came to the front suddenly in Rhodes, the young Yorkshire professional; indeed, we have to go back twenty years, to the youthful days of Mr. Allan Steel, for a similar instance of a boy cricketer virtually heading the list of bowlers in his first season of important matches. At first sight the comparison would appear to be in favour of the amateur; but on the other hand the fact

must not be overlooked that there are ten first-class batsmen to-day to one who was playing regularly in 1878, and that as a whole the wickets nowadays are far more favourable to run-getting than was the case when Mr. Steel astonished and delighted the cricketing public. No great batsman has been produced during the course of the summer, but men with reputations already made, generally speaking, have upheld them; some few have shown a slight falling off, others, again, have immensely improved. Dr. W. G. Grace has once more done marvellously well, and amongst other veterans Shrewsbury, Gunn, and Abel are as good as ever. As regards younger men the same may be said of Mr. Jackson, Mr. Palairet, Mr. Woods, Brockwell, Mr. Ford, and one or two others. Mr. Stoddart returned from his failures and worries in Australia to play as splendidly as ever, and to teach an ungenerous and short-sighted section of the public that it is not good to prophesy until you know.

Mr. Townsend and Mr. Fry both played as they have never played before; and were a representative English Eleven to be chosen at this moment both men would be amongst the first few selected. It is indeed an open question if Mr. Townsend is not about the best all-round cricketer in the kingdom. Mr. Fry's performances were as peculiar as they were brilliant. He did not begin to play important matches until July had set in, yet he made over 1,600 runs for Sussex before the season ended, and has an average only a fraction below sixty. As was the case with Ranjitsinhji, most of Mr. Fry's fine efforts for Sussex were wasted, for he seldom received respectable support, and it is worthy of note that the Englishman's batting average is largely in excess of that of Ranjitsinhji in his great year. Several great bowlers have fallen somewhat from their high estate. In fact, with the exception of J. T. Hearne, who has again accomplished the extraordinary feat of taking more than 200 wickets in the season, no one (not even Mr. Townsend) outside the Yorkshire eleven has a very noteworthy record. Richardson, Mold, and Briggs have all proved more expensive than of yore, and have taken fewer wickets.

For some few years there have been officially fourteen first-class counties, but the close of the present season has made it more obvious than ever that barely half that number really merit

the distinction, and the probabilities are in favour of a revision of classification at an early date. Half a dozen of these nominally first-class county sides, in fact, have won either two matches in the course of the year, or fallen short of that modest achievement. Yorkshire easily gained the county championship, and never looked like losing the lead which they so creditably secured in May. They were again splendidly captained by Lord Hawke, one of the best judges of the game in England. The necessity for a revision of the rule which allows an innings to be declared closed only on the last day of a match, became obvious on several occasions. The gate-money question would doubtless be affected were it decreed that the closure might be put in force at any moment during the match.

A word of acknowledgment is due to James Phillips, the umpire who accompanied Mr. Stoddart on his tour to Australia. He was of opinion that Jones, the famous Australian bowler, did not bowl fairly, and he had the pluck to 'no ball' him unhesitatingly, regardless of the storm of abuse by which he knew he was sure to be assailed. On his return to England he meted out the same treatment to Mr. Fry. A professional cricketer who thus resolutely does his duty deserves the hearty support of the leading amateur players, in whose hands the ultimate fate of the game must ever rest.

A correspondent, 'F. G. B.,' kindly writes to me:—'I have read with much interest the article on Eton cricket in your August number. Mr. Hutchinson has doubtless taken every pains to ensure accuracy, and he could have probably consulted no better authority than Mr. G. Dupuis. At the same time, in view of the fact that the article will probably in the future acquire the dignity of "history," it may be well that no shadow of suspicion should attach to its "facts." I was "in college" from 1853 to 1859, and a member of the College Eleven in the latter year. I do not presume to question most of the statements in the article, but on page 162 I join issue about the composition of the various clubs. I am very certain that at that period *no* college belonged to "Sixpenny," and I cannot recollect that any ever played in "Lower Club." The *official* title of the Oppidan and College match was not "Lower Club *v.* Lower College;" at any rate, any member of the Eleven ceased *ipso facto* to belong to either. It is

rather a pity that Mr. Hutchinson has made no mention of the privilege given to boys playing in a match or game in Upper Club to be excused six o'clock "absence," their names being put in a "bill" and forwarded to the Head Master, while they had their tea at the hour named at a table laid out in Poets' Walk, below Sheep's Bridge. As the clock struck six old Atkins, the man in charge, used to bellow out, "Kettle boils!" to which the players responded, "Make tea!" and at the end of the over the game was suspended and tea taken. Perhaps Mr. Hutchinson would make some further inquiries as to my accuracy, and if necessary correct in a subsequent article, which I am sure would be gladly welcomed. I wonder whether Mr. Dupuis recollects a match, "Quid Nuncs *v.* Eton," in 1858 or 1859? Eton wanted about 80 runs to win, and made 60 without loss, when Mr. D—— went on with lobs and got the whole Eleven out for another 12 runs, or 72 in all.'

Is it not odd that writers, otherwise keen-witted and observant, will not learn a little about sport before they introduce the subject into their books? In a clever and entertaining story called 'Her Ladyship's Elephant,' one of the heroes is applauded for being 'enough of a sportsman to find no pleasure in winging tame or driven grouse and pheasants.' Nobody, surely, finds pleasure in 'winging' game; probably the author merely means shooting, but he is evidently under the impression that tame and driven birds are much the same thing, that grouse are tame, and that pheasants are driven. Finding all this on the very first page of the story is calculated to induce every person to throw the book down and read no more.

THE

BADMINTON MAGAZINE

November 1898

SOME EXPERIENCES OF AN IRISH R.M.

BY E. Œ. SOMERVILLE AND MARTIN ROSS

No. II.—TRINKET'S COLT

It was petty sessions day in Skebawn, a cold, grey day of February. A case of trespass had dragged its burden of cross summonses and cross swearing far into the afternoon, and when I left the bench my head was singing from the bellowings of the attorneys, and the smell of their clients was heavy upon my palate.

The streets still testified to the fact that it was market day, and I evaded with difficulty the sinuous course of carts full of soddenly screwed people, and steered an equally devious one for myself among the groups anchored round the doors of the public-houses. Skebawn possesses, among its legion of public-houses, one establishment which timorously, and almost imperceptibly, proffers tea to the thirsty. I turned in there, as was my custom on court days, and found the little dingy den, known as the Ladies' Coffee Room, in the occupancy of my friend and landlord, Mr. Florence McCarthy Knox, who was drinking strong tea and eating buns with serious simplicity. It was a first and quite unexpected glimpse of that domesticity that has now become a marked feature in his character.

'You're the very man I wanted to see,' I said as I sat down beside him at the oilcloth-covered table; 'a man I know in

England who is not much of a judge of character has asked me to buy him a four-year-old down here, and as I should rather be stuck by a friend than a dealer, I wish you'd take over the job.'

Flurry poured himself out another cup of tea, and dropped three lumps of sugar into it in silence.

Finally he said, 'There isn't a four-year-old in this country that I'd be seen dead with at a pig fair.'

This was discouraging, from the premier authority on horse-flesh in the district.

'But it isn't six weeks since you told me you had the finest filly in your stables that was ever foaled in the County Cork,' I protested; 'what's wrong with her?'

'Oh, is it that filly?' said Mr. Knox with a lenient smile; 'she's gone these three weeks from me. I swapped her and 6*l.* for a three-year-old Ironmonger colt, and after that I swapped the colt and 19*l.* for that Bandon horse I rode last week at your place, and after that again I sold the Bandon horse for 75*l.* to old Welply, and I had to give him back a couple of sovereigns luck-money. You see I did pretty well with the filly after all.'

'Yes, yes—oh rather,' I assented hurriedly, as one dizzily accepts the propositions of a bimetallist; 'and you don't know of anything else——?'

The room in which we were seated was closely screened from the shop by a door with a muslin-curtained window in it; several of the panes were broken, and at this juncture two voices that had for some time carried on a discussion forced themselves upon our attention.

'Begging your pardon for contradicting you, ma'am,' said the voice of Mrs. McDonald, proprietress of the tea shop, and a leading light in Skebawn Dissenting circles, shrilly tremulous with indignation, 'if the servants I recommend you won't stop with you, it's no fault of mine. If respectable young girls are set picking grass out of your gravel, in place of their proper work, certainly they will give warning!'

The voice that replied struck me as being a notable one, well-bred and imperious.

'When I take a barefooted slut out of a cabin, I don't expect her to dictate to me what her duties are!'

Flurry jerked up his chin in a noiseless laugh. 'It's my grandmother!' he whispered. 'I bet you Mrs. McDonald don't get much change out of her.'

'If I set her to clean the pig-stye I expect her to obey me,'

continued the voice in accents that would have made me clean forty pig-styes had she desired me to do so.

'Very well, ma'am,' retorted Mrs. McDonald, 'if that's the way you treat your servants, you needn't come here again looking for them. I consider your conduct is neither that of a lady nor a Christian!'

'Don't you, indeed?' replied Flurry's grandmother. 'Well, your opinion doesn't greatly distress me, for, to tell you the truth, I don't think you're much of a judge.'

'Didn't I tell you she'd score?' murmured Flurry, who was by this time applying his eye to a hole in the muslin curtain.

DRINKING STRONG TEA AND EATING BUNS WITH SERIOUS SIMPLICITY

'She's off,' he went on, returning to his tea. 'She's a great character! She's eighty-three if she's a day, and she's as sound on her legs as a three-year-old! Did you see that old shandrydan of hers in the street a while ago, and a fellow on the box with a red beard on him like Robinson Crusoe? That old mare that was on the near side—Trinket her name is—is mighty near clean bred. I can tell you her foals are worth a bit of money.'

I had heard of old Mrs. Knox of Aussolas; indeed, I had seldom dined out in the neighbourhood without hearing some new story of her and her remarkable ménage, but it had not yet been my privilege to meet her.

'Well, now,' went on Flurry in his slow voice, 'I'll tell you a

thing that's just come into my head. My grandmother promised me a foal of Trinket's the day I was one-and-twenty, and that's five years ago, and deuce a one I've got from her yet. You never were at Aussolas? No, you were not. Well, I tell you the place there is like a circus with horses. She has a couple of score of them running wild in the woods, like deer.'

'Oh, come,' I said, 'I'm a bit of a liar myself—'

'Well, she has a dozen of them anyhow, rattling good colts too, some of them, but they might as well be donkeys for all the good they are to me or anyone. It's not once in three years she sells one, and there she has them walking after her for bits of sugar, like a lot of dirty lapdogs,' ended Flurry with disgust.

'Well, what's your plan? Do you want me to make her a bid for one of the lapdogs?'

'I was thinking,' replied Flurry, with great deliberation, 'that my birthday's this week, and maybe I could work a four-year-old colt of Trinket's she has out of her in honour of the occasion.'

'And sell your grandmother's birthday present to me?'

'Just that, I suppose,' answered Flurry with a slow wink.

A few days afterwards a letter from Mr. Knox informed me that he had 'squared the old lady, and it would be all right about the colt.' He further told me that Mrs. Knox had been good enough to offer me, with him, a day's snipe shooting on the celebrated Aussolas bogs, and he proposed to drive me there the following Monday, if convenient. Most people found it convenient to shoot the Aussolas snipe bog when they got the chance. Eight o'clock on the following Monday morning saw Flurry, myself, and a groom packed into a dogcart, with portmanteaus, gun-cases, and two rampant red setters.

It was a long drive, twelve miles at least, and a very cold one. We passed through long tracts of pasture country, fraught, for Flurry, with memories of runs, which were recorded for me, fence by fence, in every one of which the biggest dog-fox in the country had gone to ground, with not two feet—measured accurately on the handle of the whip—between him and the leading hound; through bogs that imperceptibly melted into lakes, and finally down and down into a valley, where the fir trees of Aussolas clustered darkly round a glittering lake, and all but hid the grey roofs and pointed gables of Aussolas Castle.

'There's a nice stretch of a demesne for you,' remarked Flurry, pointing downwards with the whip, 'and one little old woman holding it all in the heel of her fist. Well able to hold it

she is, too, and always was, and she'll live twenty years yet, if it's only to spite my Uncle Tom—that's her eldest son—he's been twice bankrupt already with raising money on his expectations.'

'It strikes me you were lucky to keep her up to her promise about the colt,' I said.

Flurry administered a composing kick to the ceaseless strivings of the red setters under the seat.

MRS. KNOX EXTENDED A SKINNY HAND

'I used to be rather a pet with her,' he said, after a pause; 'but mind you, I haven't got him yet, and if she gets any notion I want to sell him I'll never get him, so say nothing about the business to her.'

The tall gates of Aussolas shrieked on their hinges as they admitted us, and shut with a clang behind us, in the faces of an old mare and a couple of young horses, who, foiled in their break for the excitements of the outer world, turned and galloped defiantly on either side of us. Flurry's admirable cob hammered on, regardless of all things save his duty.

'He's the only one I have that I'd trust myself here with,' said his master, flicking him approvingly with the whip; 'there are plenty of people afraid to come here at all, and when my grandmother goes out driving she has a boy on the box with a basket full of stones to peg at them. Talk of the dickens, here she is herself!'

A short, upright old woman was approaching, preceded by a white woolly dog with sore eyes and a bark like a tin trumpet; we both got out of the trap and advanced to meet the lady of the manor.

I may summarise her attire by saying that she looked as if she had robbed a scarecrow; her face was small and incongruously refined, the skinny hand that she extended to me had the grubby tan that bespoke the professional gardener, and was decorated with a magnificent diamond ring. On her head was a massive purple velvet bonnet.

'I am very glad to meet you, Major Yeates,' she said in a singularly self-possessed voice; 'your grandfather was a dancing partner of mine in old days at the Castle, when he was a handsome young aide-de-camp there, and I was—— you may judge for yourself what I was.'

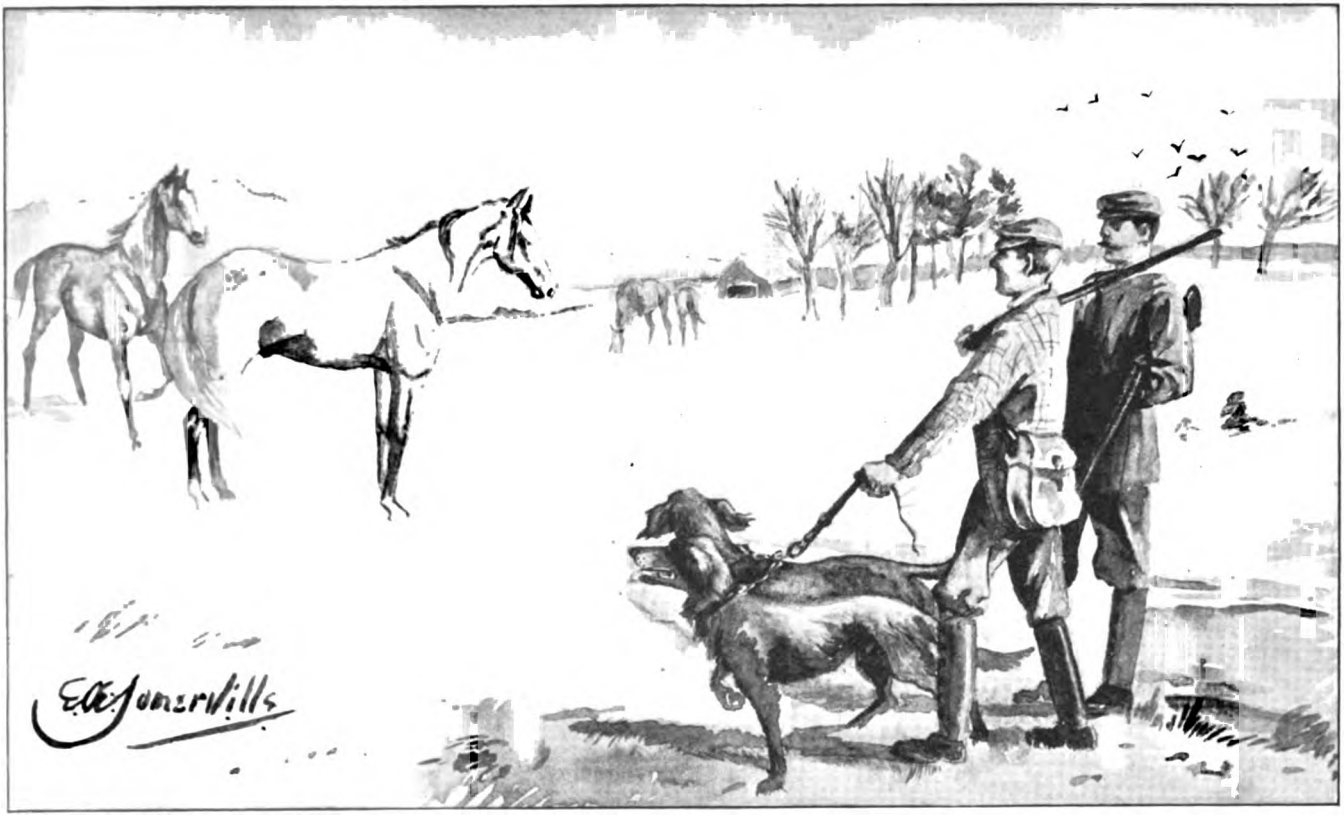
She ended with a startling little hoot of laughter, and I was aware that she quite realised the world's opinion of her, and was indifferent to it.

Our way to the bogs took us across Mrs. Knox's home farm, and through a large field in which several young horses were grazing.

'There now, that's my fellow,' said Flurry, pointing to a fine-looking colt, 'the chestnut with the white diamond on his forehead. He'll run into three figures before he's done, but we'll not tell that to the old lady!'

The famous Aussolas bogs were as full of snipe as usual, and a good deal fuller of water than any bogs I had ever shot before. I was on my day, and Flurry was not, and as he is ordinarily an infinitely better snipe shot than I, I felt at peace with the world and all men as we walked back, wet through, at five o'clock.

The sunset had waned, and a big white moon was making the eastern tower of Aussolas look like a thing in a fairy tale or a play when we arrived at the hall door. An individual, whom I recognised as the Robinson Crusoe coachman, admitted us to a hall, the like of which one does not often see. The walls were panelled with dark oak up to the gallery that ran round three



'THERE, NOW, THAT'S MY FELLOW,' SAID FLURRY

sides of it the balusters of the wide staircase were heavily carved, and blackened portraits of Flurry's ancestors on the spindle side stared sourly down on their descendant as he tramped upstairs with the bog mould on his hobnailed boots.

We had just changed into dry clothes when Robinson Crusoe shoved his red beard round the corner of the door, with the information that the mistress said we were to stay for dinner. My heart sank. It was then barely half-past five. I said something about having no evening clothes and having to get home early.

'Sure the dinner'll be in another half-hour,' said Robinson Crusoe, joining hospitably in the conversation; 'and as for evening clothes —— God bless ye!'

The door closed behind him.

'Never mind,' said Flurry, 'I dare say you'll be glad enough to eat another dinner by the time you get home.' He laughed. 'Poor Slipper!' he added inconsequently, and only laughed again when I asked for an explanation.

Old Mrs. Knox received us in the library, where she was seated by a roaring turf fire, which lit the room a good deal more effectively than the pair of candles that stood beside her in tall silver candlesticks. Ceaseless and implacable growls from under her chair indicated the presence of the woolly dog. She talked with confounding culture of the books that rose all round her to the ceiling; her evening dress was accomplished by means of an additional white shawl, rather dirtier than its congeners; as I took her in to dinner she quoted Virgil to me, and in the same breath screeched an objurgation at a being whose matted head rose suddenly into view from behind an ancient Chinese screen, as I have seen the head of a Zulu woman peer over a bush.

Dinner was as incongruous as everything else. Detestable soup in a splendid old silver tureen that was nearly as dark in hue as Robinson Crusoe's thumb; a perfect salmon, perfectly cooked, on a chipped kitchen dish, such cut glass as is not easy to find nowadays, sherry that, as Flurry subsequently remarked, would burn the shell off an egg, and a bottle of port, draped in immemorial cobwebs, wan with age, and probably priceless. Throughout the vicissitudes of the meal Mrs. Knox's conversation flowed on undismayed, directed sometimes at me—she had installed me in the position of friend of her youth, and talked to me as if I were my own grandfather—sometimes at Crusoe, with whom she had several heated arguments, and sometimes she would make a statement of remarkable frankness on the subject of her horse-farming affairs to Flurry, who, very much on his

best behaviour, agreed with all she said, and risked no original remark. As I listened to them both, I remembered with infinite amusement how he had told me once that 'a pet name she had for him was "Tony Lumpkin," and no one but herself knew what she meant by it.' It seemed strange that she made no allusion to Trinket's colt or to Flurry's birthday, but, mindful of my instructions, I held my peace.

As, at about half-past eight, we drove away in the moonlight, Flurry congratulated me solemnly on my success with his grandmother. He was good enough to tell me that she would marry me to-morrow if I asked her, and he wished I would, even if it was only to cut out his Uncle Tom. A sympathetic giggle behind me told me that Michael, on the back seat, had heard and relished the jest.

We had left the gates of Aussolas about half a mile behind when, at the corner of a by-road, Flurry pulled up. A short squat figure arose from the black shadow of a furze bush and came out into the moonlight, swinging its arms like a cabman and cursing audibly.

'Oh murdher, oh murdher, Misther Flurry! What kept ye at all? 'Twould perish the crows to be waiting here the way I am these two hours——'

'Ah, shut your mouth, Slipper!' said Flurry, who, to my surprise, had turned back the rug and was taking off his driving coat, 'I couldn't help it. Come on, Yeates, we've got to get out here.'

'What for?' I asked, in not unnatural bewilderment.

'It's all right. I'll tell you as we go along,' replied my companion, who was already turning to follow Slipper up the by-road. 'Take the trap on, Michael, and wait at the River's Cross.' He waited for me to come up with him, and then put his hand on my arm. 'You see, Major, this is the way it is. My grandmother's given me that colt right enough, but if I waited for her to send him over to me I'd never see a hair of his tail. So I just thought that as we were over here we might as well take him back with us, and maybe you'll give us a help with him; he'll not be altogether too handy for a first go off.'

I was staggered. An infant in arms could scarcely have failed to discern the fishiness of the transaction, and I begged Mr. Knox not to put himself to this trouble on my account, as I had no doubt I could find a horse for my friend elsewhere. Mr. Knox assured me that it was no trouble at all, quite the contrary, and that, since his grandmother had given him the colt, he saw

no reason why he should not take him when he wanted him; also, that if I didn't want him he'd be glad enough to keep him himself; and finally, that I wasn't the chap to go back on a friend, but I was welcome to drive back to Shreelane with Michael this minute if I liked.

Of course I yielded in the end. I told Flurry I should lose my job over the business, and he said I could then marry his grandmother, and the discussion was abruptly closed by the necessity of following Slipper over a locked five-barred gate.

Our pioneer took us over about half a mile of country, knocking down stone gaps where practicable and scrambling over tall banks in the deceptive moonlight. We found ourselves at length in a field with a shed in one corner of it; in a dim group of farm buildings a little way off a light was shining.

'Wait here,' said Flurry to me in a whisper; 'the less noise the better. It's an open shed, and we'll just slip in and coax him out.'

Slipper unwound from his waist a halter, and my colleagues glided like spectres into the shadow of the shed, leaving me to meditate on my duties as Resident Magistrate, and on the questions that would be asked in the House by our local member when Slipper had given away the adventure in his cups.

In less than a minute three shadows emerged from the shed, where two had gone in. They had got the colt.

'He came out as quiet as a calf when he winded the sugar,' said Flurry; 'it was well for me I filled my pockets from grandmama's sugar basin.'

He and Slipper had a rope from each side of the colt's head; they took him quickly across a field towards a gate. The colt stepped daintily between them over the moonlit grass; he snorted occasionally, but appeared on the whole amenable.

The trouble began later, and was due, as trouble often is, to the beguilements of a short cut. Against the maturer judgment of Slipper, Flurry insisted on following a route that he assured us he knew as well as his own pocket, and the consequence was that in about five minutes I found myself standing on top of a bank hanging on to a rope, on the other end of which the colt dangled and danced, while Flurry, with the other rope, lay prone in the ditch, and Slipper administered to the bewildered colt's hindquarters such chastisement as could be ventured on.

I have no space to narrate in detail the atrocious difficulties and disasters of the short cut. How the colt set to work to buck, and went away across a field, dragging the faithful Slipper,

literally *ventre-à-terre*, after him, while I picked myself in ignominy out of a briar patch, and Flurry cursed himself black in the face. How we were attacked by ferocious cur dogs, and I lost my eyeglass; and how, as we neared the River's Cross, Flurry spotted the police patrol on the road, and we all hid behind a rick of turf, while I realised in fulness what an exceptional ass I was, to have been beguiled into an enterprise that involved hiding with Slipper from the Royal Irish Constabulary.

Let it suffice to say that Trinket's infernal offspring was finally handed over on the high road to Michael and Slipper, and Flurry drove me home in a state of mental and physical overthrow.

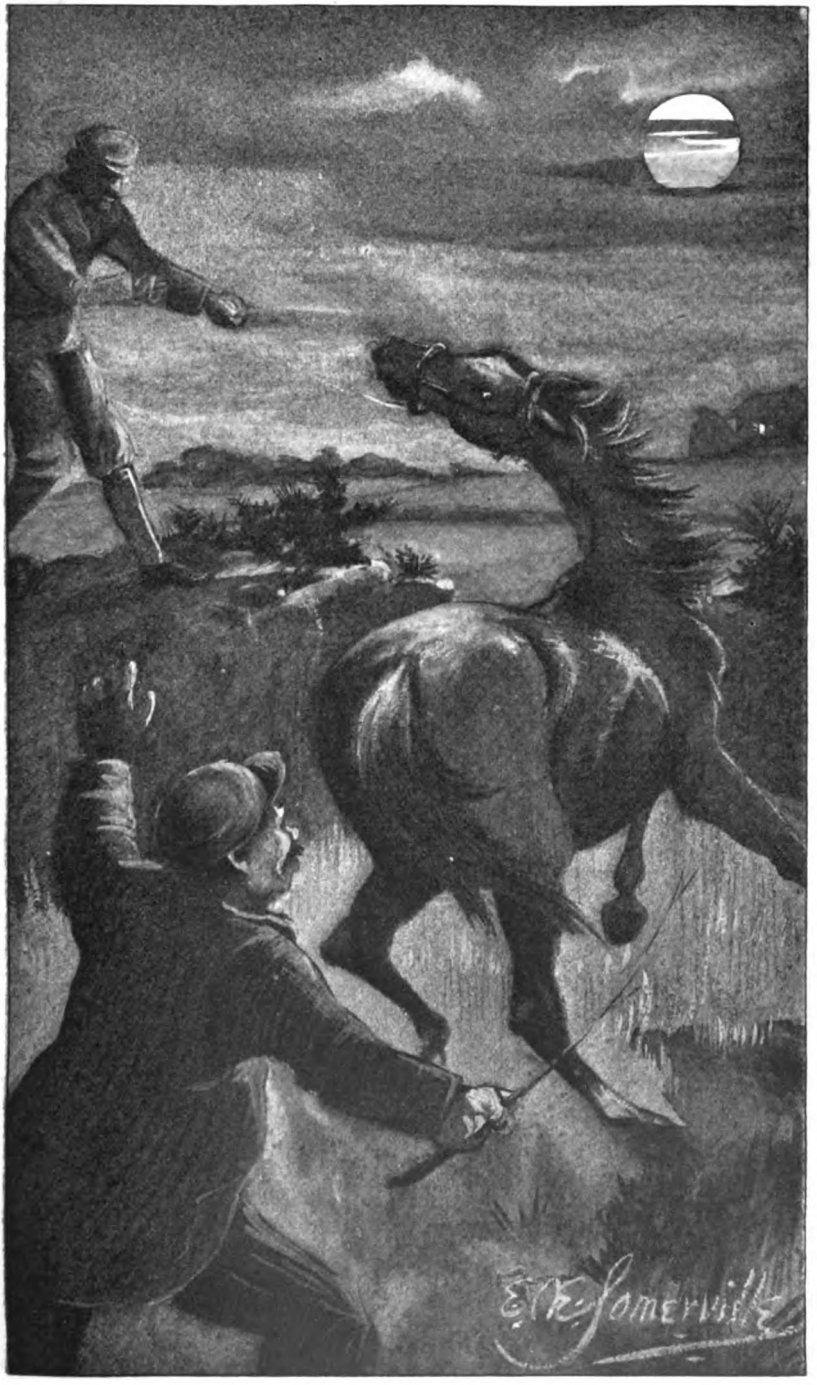
I saw nothing of my friend Mr. Knox for the next couple of days, by the end of which time I had worked up a high polish on my misgivings, and had determined to tell him that under no circumstances would I have anything to say to his grandmother's birthday present. It was like my usual luck that, instead of writing a note to this effect, I thought it would be good for my liver to walk across the hills to Tory Cottage and tell Flurry so in person.

It was a bright, blustry morning, after a muggy day. The feeling of spring was in the air, the daffodils were already in bud, and crocuses showed purple in the grass on either side of the avenue. It was only a couple of miles to Tory Cottage by the way across the hills; I walked fast, and it was barely twelve o'clock when I saw its pink walls and clumps of evergreens below me. As I looked down at it the chiming of Flurry's hounds in the kennels came to me on the wind; I stood still to listen, and could almost have sworn that I was hearing again the clash of Magdalen bells, hard at work on May morning.

The path that I was following led downwards through a larch plantation to Flurry's back gate. Hot wafts from some hideous cauldron at the other side of a wall apprised me of the vicinity of the kennels and their cuisine, and the fir trees round were hung with gruesome and unknown joints. I thanked heaven that I was not a master of hounds, and passed on as quickly as might be to the hall door.

I rang two or three times without response; then the door opened a couple of inches and was instantly slammed in my face. I heard the hurried paddling of bare feet on oilcloth, and a voice, 'Hurry, Bridgie, hurry! There's quality at the door!'

Bridgie, holding a dirty cap on with one hand, presently arrived and informed me that she believed Mr. Knox was out



I FOUND MYSELF STANDING ON TOP OF A BANK HANGING ON TO A ROPE

about the place. She seemed perturbed, and she cast scared glances down the little drive while speaking to me.

I knew enough of Flurry's habits to shape a tolerably direct course for his whereabouts. He was, as I had expected, in the training paddock, a field behind the stable yard, in which he had put up practice jumps for his horses. It was a good-sized field with clumps of furze in it, and Flurry was standing near one of these with his hands in his pockets, singularly unoccupied. I supposed that he was prospecting for a place to put up another jump. He did not see me coming, and turned with a start as I spoke to him. There was a queer expression of mingled guilt and what I can only describe as divilment in his grey eyes as he greeted me. In my dealings with Flurry Knox, I have since formed the habit of sitting tight, in a general way, when I see that expression.

'Well, who's coming next, I wonder!' he said, as he shook hands with me; 'it's not ten minutes since I had two of your d——d peelers here searching the whole place for my grandmother's colt!'

'What!' I exclaimed, feeling cold all down my back; 'do you mean the police have got hold of it?'

'They haven't got hold of the colt anyway,' said Flurry, looking sideways at me from under the peak of his cap, with the glint of the sun in his eye. 'I got word in time before they came.'

'What do you mean?' I demanded; 'where is he? For heaven's sake don't tell me you've sent the brute over to my place!'

'It's a good job for you I didn't,' replied Flurry, 'as the police are on their way to Shreelane this minute to consult you about it. *You!*' He gave utterance to one of his short diabolical fits of laughter. 'He's where they'll not find him, anyhow. Ho! ho! It's the funniest hand I ever played!'

'Oh, yes, it's devilish funny, I've no doubt,' I retorted, beginning to lose my temper, as is the manner of many people when they are frightened; 'but I give you fair warning that if Mrs. Knox asks me any questions about it, I shall tell her the whole story.'

'All right,' responded Flurry; 'and when you do, don't forget to tell her how you flogged the colt out on to the road over her own bounds ditch.'

'Very well,' I said hotly, 'I may as well go home and send in my papers. They'll break me over this——'

'Ah, hold on, Major,' said Flurry soothingly, 'it'll be all right.

No one knows anything. It's only on spec the old lady sent the bobbies here. If you'll keep quiet it'll all blow over.'

'I don't care,' I said, struggling hopelessly in the toils; 'if I meet your grandmother, and she asks me about it, I shall tell her all I know.'

'Please God you'll not meet her! After all, it's not once in a blue moon that she——' began Flurry. Even as he said the words his face changed. 'Holy fly!' he ejaculated, 'isn't that her dog coming into the field? Look at her bonnet over the wall! Hide, hide for your life!' He caught me by the shoulder and shoved me down among the furze bushes before I realised what had happened.

'Get in there! I'll talk to her.'

I may as well confess that at the mere sight of Mrs. Knox's purple bonnet my heart had turned to water. In that dread moment I knew what it would be like to tell her how I, having eaten her salmon, and capped her quotations, and drunk her old port, had gone forth and helped to steal her horse. I abandoned my dignity, my sense of honour; I took the furze prickles to my breast and wallowed in them.

Mrs. Knox had advanced with vengeful speed; already she was in high altercation with Flurry at no great distance from where I lay; varying sounds of battle reached me, and I gathered that Flurry was not—to put it mildly—shrinking from that economy of truth that the situation required.

'Is it that curby, long-backed brute? You promised him to me long ago, but I wouldn't be bothered with him!'

The old lady uttered a laugh of shrill derision. 'Is it likely I'd promise you my best colt? And still more, is it likely that you'd refuse him if I did?'

'Very well, ma'am.' Flurry's voice was admirably indignant. 'Then I suppose I'm a liar and a thief.'

'I'd be more obliged to you for the information if I hadn't known it before,' responded his grandmother with lightning speed; 'if you swore to me on a stack of Bibles you knew nothing about my colt I wouldn't believe you! I shall go straight to Major Yeates and ask his advice. I believe *him* to be a gentleman, in spite of the company he keeps!'

I writhed deeper into the furze bushes, and thereby discovered a sandy rabbit run, along which I crawled, with my cap well over my eyes, and the furze needles stabbing me through my stockings. The ground shelved a little, promising profounder concealment, but the bushes were very thick, and I laid hold of the bare stem

of one to help my progress. It lifted out of the ground in my hand, revealing a freshly cut stump. Something snorted, not a yard away; I glared through the opening, and was confronted by the long, horrified face of Mrs. Knox's colt, mysteriously on a level with my own.

Even without the white diamond on his forehead I should have divined the truth; but how in the name of wonder had Flurry persuaded him to couch like a woodcock in the heart of

I ADVANCED A CRAFTY HAND

a furze brake? For a full minute I lay as still as death for fear of frightening him, while the voices of Flurry and his grandmother raged on alarmingly close to me. The colt snorted, and blew long breaths through his wide nostrils, but he did not move. I crawled an inch or two nearer, and after a few seconds of cautious peering I grasped the position. They had buried him.

A small sandpit among the furze had been utilised as a grave; they had filled him in up to his withers with sand, and a few furze bushes, artistically disposed round the pit, had done

the rest. As the depth of Flurry's guile was revealed, laughter came upon me like a flood; I gurgled and shook apoplectically, and the colt gazed at me with serious surprise, until a sudden outburst of barking close to my elbow administered a fresh shock to my tottering nerves.

Mrs. Knox's woolly dog had tracked me into the furze, and was now baying the colt and me with mingled terror and indignation. I addressed him in a whisper, with perfidious endearments, advancing a crafty hand towards him the while, made a snatch for the back of his neck, missed it badly, and got him by the ragged fleece of his hind quarters as he tried to flee. If I had flayed him alive he could hardly have uttered a more deafening series of yells, but, like a fool, instead of letting him go, I dragged him towards me, and tried to stifle the noise by holding his muzzle. The tussle lasted engrossingly for a few seconds, and then the climax of the nightmare arrived.

Mrs. Knox's voice, close behind me, said, 'Let go my dog this instant, sir! Who are you——'

Her voice faded away, and I knew that she also had seen the colt's head.

I positively felt sorry for her. At her age there was no knowing what effect the shock might have on her. I scrambled to my feet and confronted her.

'Major Yeates!' she said. There was a deathly pause. 'Will you kindly tell me,' said Mrs. Knox slowly, 'am I in Bedlam, or are you? And *what is that?*'

She pointed to the colt, and that unfortunate animal, recognising the voice of his mistress, uttered a hoarse and lamentable whinny. Mrs. Knox felt around her for support, found only furze prickles, gazed speechlessly at me, and then, to her eternal honour, fell into wild cackles of laughter.

So I may say did Flurry and I. I embarked on my explanation and broke down; Flurry followed suit and broke down too. Overwhelming laughter held us all three, disintegrating our very souls. Mrs. Knox pulled herself together first.

'I acquit you, Major Yeates, I acquit you, though appearances are against you. It's clear enough to me you've fallen among thieves.' She stopped and glowered at Flurry. Her purple bonnet was over one eye. 'I'll thank you, sir,' she said, 'to dig out that horse before I leave this place. And when you've dug him out you may keep him. I'll be no receiver of stolen goods!'

She broke off and shook her fist at him. 'Upon my conscience, Tony, I'd give a guinea to have thought of it myself!'

THE STRATH, BRAEMORE, LOOKING TOWARDS LOCH BROOM

THE GAME BOOK OF A FAMOUS ESTATE

BY THE REV. MONTAGUE FOWLER

In one of the most picturesque corners of the British Isles, including and surrounded by some of the most exquisite scenery of which Scotland can boast, is situated the sporting estate of Braemore, consisting of some 42,000 acres of deer forest, with a small quantity of arable land in the valley. This property was acquired, about five-and-thirty years ago, by Sir John Fowler, who, besides building the handsome house on a slope of the hill, 750 feet above the sea, planted upwards of nine millions of trees along the strath, many of which are now thirty or forty feet in height. These woods form excellent cover for pheasants, woodcock, blackgame, &c., and are invaluable as shelter for the deer during a severe winter, when the deep snow on the hills often reduces them to the verge of starvation.

At Braemore the sportsman finds every kind of amusement and interest. The deerstalker can indulge in the 'king of pastimes,' either in the weird and gloomy surroundings of 'Corrie Grant,' where on one side the precipitous side of Ben Dearg looms perpendicularly over him, generally capped by dark

misty clouds, or among the so-called 'flats,' whence he obtains a clear view of the Hebrides across sixty miles of sea. 'Piscator' finds, ready to his hand, within a mile of the 'big hoose,' as the residence is popularly called, a charming stretch of salmon river of about four miles in extent, with numerous pools where, except when the fish are sulky, a 'rise' at least may be expected; or, if his ambition does not soar above trout, he can visit some of the lochs where fish can be secured up to eight pounds in weight, or streams where a basket of a hundred or more small trout can easily be caught in an afternoon. On the low ground of the forest as many as fifty brace of grouse, shot over dogs, have frequently fallen to one gun; while the yacht, moored at the head of Loch Broom, gives opportunities of indulging in the varied and uncertain interest of sea-fishing.

For ladies and visitors who eschew sport, the charms of the scenery—especially in Corrie Halloch, a narrow gorge with perpendicular sides running down to a depth of 220 feet, the rocks richly covered with ferns and mosses, and the rapid stream dashing down in a fall of 130 feet; or the celebrated Lynn Fall—give endless opportunities for sketching, or for enjoying some of the wonders of nature which abound there. When it is realised that Braemore is upwards of twenty miles from the railway, and consequently unknown to the tourist and the tripper, it is not surprising that the visitors' book and the game book should record the visits of many notable and striking personalities. The recital of all the sporting achievements, accomplished with rifle, rod, and gun, as indicated in these histories, would fill a volume; but it may be of interest to the readers of *The Badminton* to give a few typical anecdotes, to the accuracy of which the pages of these records will testify.

Two of the most charming sketches preserved in the visitors' book are from the pencil of Sir Edwin Landseer, the eminent artist, who frequently expressed his appreciation of the beauties of Braemore, and who took advantage of his visit to make expeditions to the deer forest—not for sporting purposes, but with the object of studying the deer and their movements. More than one of his celebrated pictures represent scenery of which he gained some knowledge when visiting his old friend, Sir John Fowler. It is true that the magnificent 'royal' heads, such as that possessed by 'The Monarch of the Glen,' are never met with now. The reason for this, which is well known to those with whom stalking is a favourite sport, may be briefly mentioned. The forests (which are sometimes thought to be thus named on the

lucus a non lucendo principle, because there is not a tree to be seen on them now, although the roots of trees buried in the peat

THE CORRIE HALLOCH FALL, BRAEMORE

bogs show that formerly they were richly wooded) are not fenced off, but the deer, which feed and travel up wind, roam from one property to another. Hence the stalker may, when the wind is

in the east, examine the whole of the ground with his glass, and not see fifty deer, and perhaps not a single stag, on the property. The next day, if the wind has changed, the forest may, in the words of the Irish poacher, be 'fairly crawling with them.' As there is a friendly rivalry on each property to secure the finest head of the season, a stag is never able to attain his full maturity before he falls a victim. The grandest head ever secured at Braemore was killed by the brother-in-law of the proprietor, Major Holmes—an ardent sportsman—in 1868. In strength of horn, width of beam, and symmetry of outline, it is as nearly perfect as it could be. The stag had probably reached the fulness of his growth and strength owing to the fact that for many years previously neither this nor the neighbouring forests had been shot over.

Another eminent artist, the late President of the Royal Academy (Sir John Millais), spent many enjoyable weeks, during several successive seasons, amid this attractive highland scenery. He was a keen sportsman, and, in the visitors' book above referred to, has left several graphic records. In one of these, as will be seen by the illustration on p. 505, he describes, more vividly than the most accomplished *raconteur* could possibly do, the details of a day's deer-stalking. The proud and happy sportsman rides gaily off to victory with the head stalker, the gillies and deer-hound preceding them to the ground. It used to be the custom to take a dog, which was let loose, if a stag was wounded, in order to separate him from the herd and bring him to bay. But it was found that the sight of a dog so frightened the other deer that they would not return to the same spot for a long time, and consequently hounds are now seldom if ever employed in the forest. Having ridden to the spying place, the stalker and gillie at once endeavour to 'pick up a beast with the glass,' while the sportsman —the likeness shows that the artist is describing his own experiences—is in a state of anxious expectancy. We next see them crawling up to the ridge whence the shot is to be fired. The stalker is slightly and gently raising his head to see whether the stag is within range, his right hand being expressive of warning to the eager and nervous amateur to keep as close to the heather as possible. At last the supreme moment has arrived, and the line of deer galloping up the hill, the attitude of dejection on the part of the unhappy sportsman, and the look of intense disgust on the stalker's face, tell the tale of a 'miss.' The effect of such a mishap on the man who has secured you an easy chance of bringing down a fine stag is well described by

Dayrell Trelawney, in a capital article on deer-stalking which appeared a few years ago. 'If you miss an easy shot after a long and tedious stalk, you will be disgusted. Not so much so, however, as your gillie. A repetition of this proceeding will not improve the previous tension. During the walk home you will think that your gillie is the most silent person in Scotland. In the gillies' court that evening, when there are inquiries as to what your sport has been, he will appear to you the most talkative person on earth. He will, on the slightest provocation, give a minute and detailed account of your shots, and of the beauty of the stag you missed, before the circumstantial evidence of which your fancy versions will fade into space. You may be a duke or a county councillor, or even a Welsh Nonconformist, when you are at home; but on a Scotch moor you will simply be the man who hits his stag, or the man who misses. Gillies are no respecters of persons.' In the sketch of the solitary rider returning home to confess his failure we see little of that jaunty anticipation which is shown in the delineation of the proudly expectant sportsman setting out to win fame and glory.

Original sketch by Sir Edwin Landseer, R.A.

Original sketch by Sir Edwin Landseer, R.A.

But Sir John Millais was not always unsuccessful. In 'The Triumphs of the Year' (on p. 497) we see him, in a sketch by himself, having just achieved the distinction of bringing down a 'right and left.' McHardy, who for thirty years has been the head keeper and stalker at Braemore, and enjoys the friendship, not only of the members of the family which he has served so

faithfully, but of most of the visitors who have enjoyed a day on the hill with him, is preparing to 'grailoch' the deer before they are mounted on the ponies to be brought home. The day of the late P.R.A.'s triumph witnessed the discomfiture of that eminent politician, the present leader of the Opposition, whose first venture with the rifle resulted in securing two roe-deer; and, although the accuracy of aim required is even greater in the case of these beautiful creatures, the 'kudos' attaching to such a feat was evidently, in Sir John Millais' opinion, much less than in his own case. Sir William Harcourt, however, was soon rewarded by a successful day in the forest, and 'the great event of W. V. H.'s life' is immortalised by Millais' inimitable pen. This portrait of Sir William, sketched thirty years ago, is still a likeness, and will recall to his mind that the laurel wreath, which the cherub is about to place on his brow, commemorates a victory not less enjoyable at the time than some of his subsequent political successes.

The other sketch on the same page—'Braemore bringing a stag to bay'—will need a word of explanation. As everyone knows, a proprietor in the highlands bears in the neighbourhood the name of his estate, so that Sir John Fowler is invariably called 'Braemore,' which reminds me of an anecdote that bears re-telling. Mr. Cameron of Lochiel, a frequent and welcome guest at Braemore, and a keen sportsman, arriving at a friend's house for a dinner party, was with his wife announced as 'Lochiel and Lady Margaret Cameron.' It will be remembered by many that considerable amusement was caused by the late Sir Frank Lockwood, who was following immediately behind, and who desired the servant to announce '26 Lennox Gardens and Lady Lockwood.' But to return. 'Bay' was the nickname of Mr. Evelyn Fowler, the youngest son of the family, who, standing as he now does considerably over six feet in height, could with difficulty be identified with the diminutive kilted and golden-haired child who is pointing in wondering delight at the trophy of his father's prowess.

The late Earl Cairns, when Lord High Chancellor, was more than once a visitor to Braemore. The following incident is probably unique in interest. Returning from the forest about six o'clock, having brought down two good stags, he was met by Sir John (to whose rifle five stags had fallen), with the information that an official had that moment arrived from London bringing the Great Seal, which had to be affixed to some important State documents. And so, with the evidences of their

Names

Arrival

Date

From

Departure

Date

For

Remarks

THE TRIUMPHS of the YEAR

THE GREAT EVENT

A PAGE FROM THE VISITORS BOOK

Original sketches by Sir John Millais, P.R.A.

skill as sportsmen surrounding them, the distinguished visitor and his host stood in the courtyard, while the insignia of his office were attached to the parchments. The entry in the visitors' book made by Lord Cairns before his departure commemorating the event is worth reproducing. It is as follows:

'About this time a great seal was, for the first time, seen on this part of the coast, and was allowed to depart, not only unmolested, but thankful and happy, carrying away impressions of Braemore more lasting than any which it made while there.'

The present Earl Cairns, a son of the distinguished Chancellor, has frequently enjoyed the delights of the Braemore forest, and his accuracy of aim on the hill is fully equal to that which has secured him so great a reputation at Bisley. Few men have accomplished what he did on one occasion. He had to leave by the mail at midday, to catch a train at the nearest station, over twenty miles distant. Starting before 8 A.M., he rode quickly to the spying place, and after a rapid and successful stalk secured two stags. Another 'beast' was soon spied at the further end of the corrie, and after an hour's stalk he, too, fell to the unerring aim of this indefatigable hunter, who managed to reach the keeper's lodge, change his clothes, and take his seat on the coach.

The late General Henry Hope Crealock spent a few weeks, for many consecutive seasons, at Braemore. He was always a delightful companion, and his rough but artistic pen-and-ink sketches, of his experiences in the forest, were interesting records of pleasant days. His desire, when he came within shot of a stag, to examine his would-be victim through the binoculars he habitually carried—which he always preferred to the more usual telescope—occasionally led to his being seen by the deer, and consequently losing the chance of a shot. When this happened, the indignation of the stalker was sometimes expressed in no measured language, and led to a coolness between the two for the rest of the day.

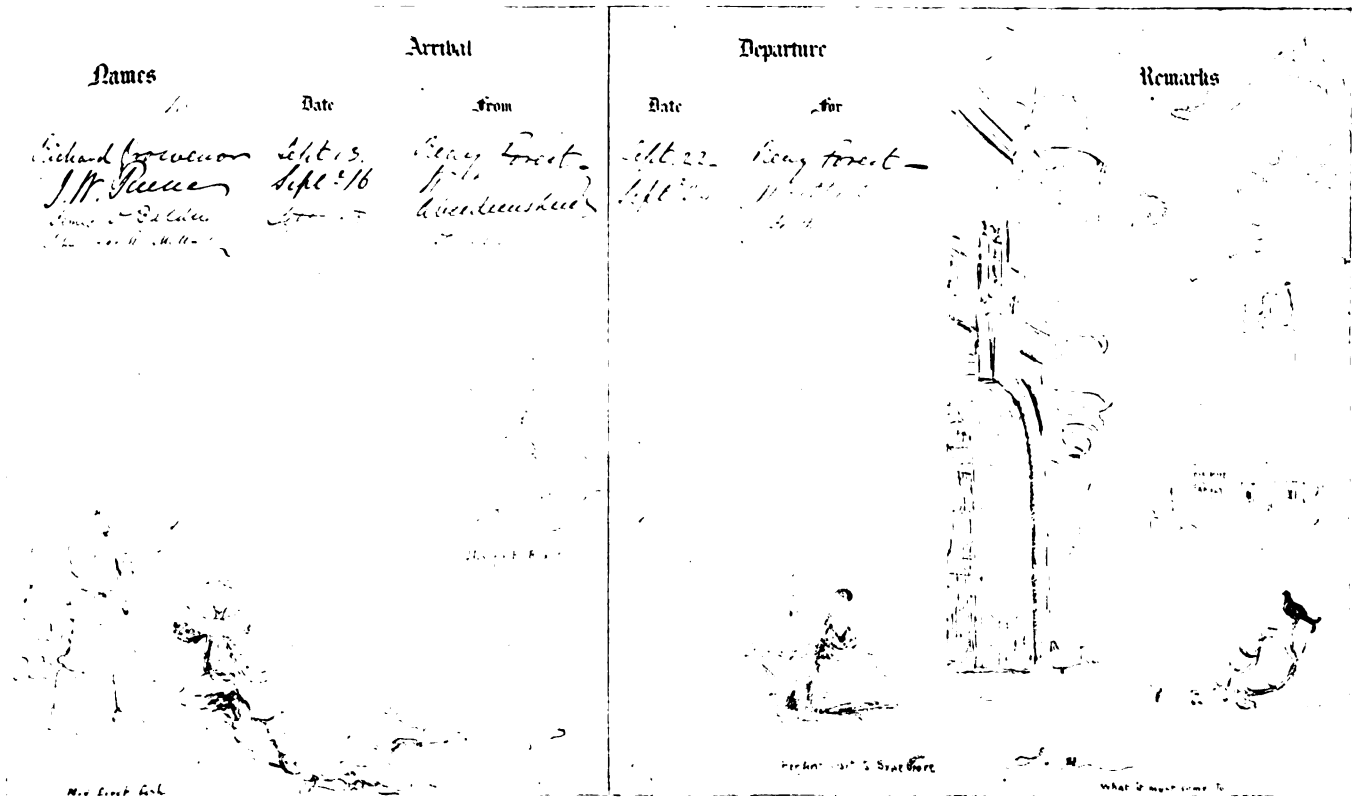
Perhaps no visitors have been more welcome, or have appreciated the natural and sporting attractions more, than Earl Cranbrook and his sons. Lord Medway is a keen shot, while his brother, the Hon. Alfred Gathorne Hardy, excels with the rod and fly. In his recently published volume on the salmon, which admirably combines the fascination of pointed anecdotes with a great variety of instructive information, he mentions several remarkable feats in the river Broom, to which reference is made below.

One of the strangest events that ever happened in the forest is connected with the name of the late Mr. Arthur Guest, Lord Wimborne's brother, who died a few months ago. He had an easy shot at a stag, but failed to bring him down. The keeper, however, who was looking through his glass, saw that the bullet had not actually missed. It had struck the animal's tail just below the junction with the spine, and cut it clean off. The tail was picked up in the heather, and carried home, to corroborate a story which would otherwise have been regarded as the product of a romantic imagination.

Mr. Arthur Fowler, the eldest son of the owner of Braemore, performed a feat, when only seventeen, which has rarely been accomplished. He killed three stags at one stalk with two consecutive shots. The bullet from the right barrel went straight through the heart of the stag at which he aimed, and killed a second which was standing behind it. With the second barrel he secured the third stag. He repeated this performance a few years later.

In the illustration on p. 501, Sir John Millais shows signs of evident alarm as to what would be the result of several 'saft' days, when it rained continuously. The entrance porch of the house is depicted, the family having sought safety in a modern 'ark.' The deer are swimming about, vainly seeking dry land, while a fine blackcock has secured a comfortable resting place on the 'cup' of the stag's antlers. 'His first beast' represents Mr. James D. Baldry, returning from the forest with the proud and jaunty step that marks the joy experienced in shooting one's first stag. On the same page is the record of a drawing-room scene, entitled 'Her first visit to Braemore,' which hardly requires elaborate or detailed explanation. Its similarity to what occurs in most country-houses, in the intervals of sport, will commend its meaning to the intelligent appreciation of readers of both sexes.

An amusing incident took place when the late Lord Strathnairn went out in the forest for a day's stalking. He was somewhat advanced in years, but his firm and erect seat in the saddle (acquired during a long and distinguished military career), as he rode away from the house, gave no indication of failing physical powers. When he arrived at the spying-place he dismounted, and the gillies at once commenced to search the ground. After the lapse of about three-quarters of an hour they discovered a fine stag. But on looking round for the distinguished sportsman, they could find no trace of him, and to all



A PAGE FROM THE VISITORS' BOOK
Original sketches by SIR JOHN MILLAIS, P.R.A.

appearance he had been spirited away. An hour was occupied in the search, and at length he was discovered, almost completely hidden away in a kind of natural cave under a huge boulder, fast asleep. They roused him, and started up the hill, but before they had gone far he was obliged to stop. The stalker, young, strong, and enthusiastic, hoisted the distinguished Indian veteran on to his shoulders, and proceeded in the direction of the stag. But, in the meantime, a change in the wind had caused the deer to shift their ground, and the self-denying energy of the keeper was thus of no avail.

Another interesting and distinguished visitor to Braemore was Prince Hassan, the third son of the late Khedive, Ismail, of Egypt, who was educated at Oxford. He was soon introduced to the delights of deer-stalking, and the spot, on the east side of Ben Dearg, where he killed his first stag, has ever since been known as 'The Prince's Corrie.' Sir Henry Halford, the famous rifle-shot, has also exhibited his accuracy of markmanship at a living as well as at 'the running' stag; while Admiral Sir William Kennedy, who is one of the keenest of sportsmen, has never failed to distinguish himself both in the forest and at the river.

A record of sport in Braemore Forest would be incomplete without a passing mention of the owner's prowess. For many years, until he reached the age of seventy-five, he was in the habit of going on the hill on an average three or four days a week, and there were few, if any, of his guests who could compete with him in steady average accuracy of aim. He was invariably accompanied by the head stalker, McHardy, whose disappointment when they came home unsuccessful was far greater than that of his master.

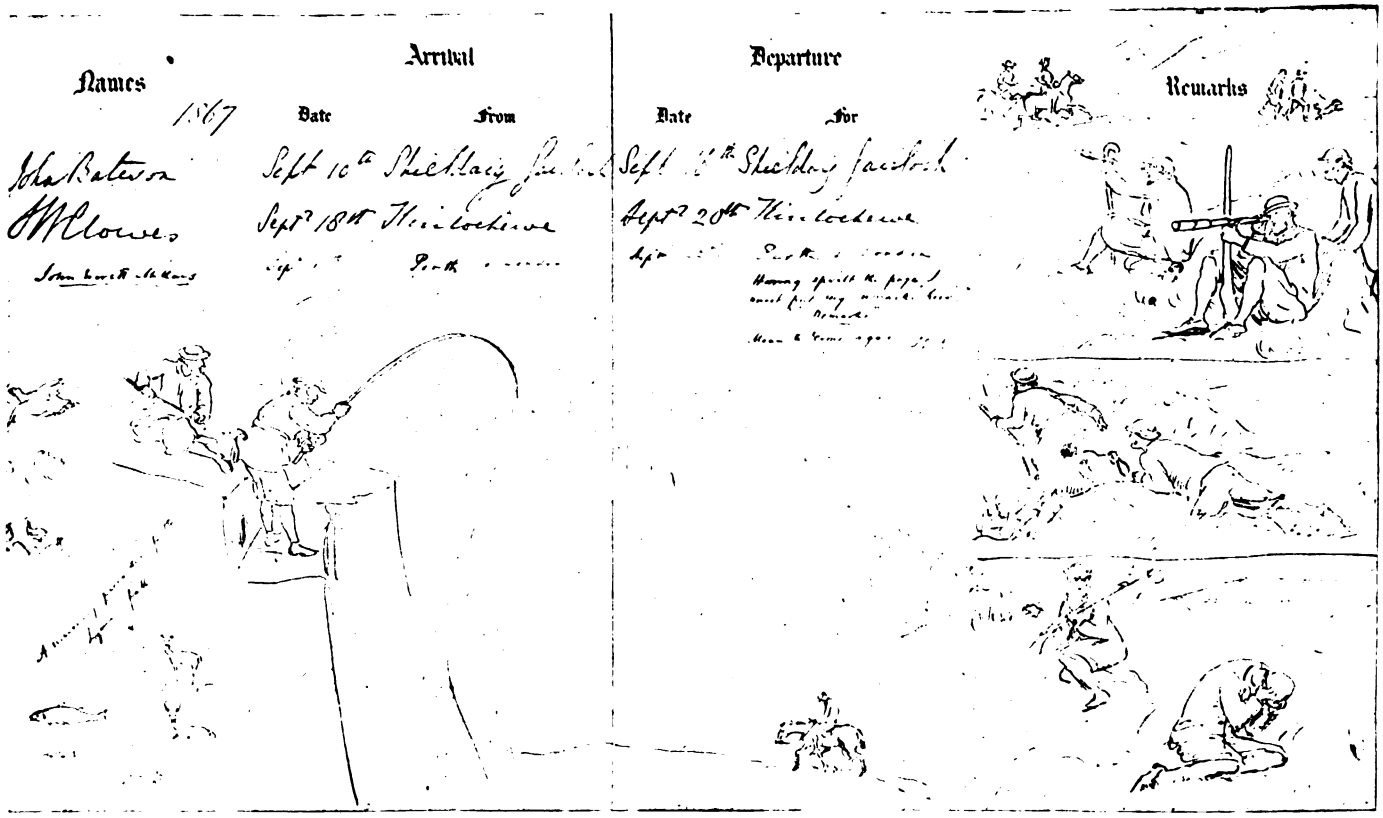
The heaviest stag ever killed at Braemore weighed 20 st. 1 lb. This was a one-horned stag, which had been known in the forest for many years. He seemed to bear a charmed life; for, though frequent attempts were made to secure him, he always escaped the bullets. Sir John Fowler spent a whole day stalking him, and finally, after waiting several hours, was obliged to fire before he rose, only a few inches of his body being visible, and the shot was unsuccessful. A few days later another sportsman had a good chance at him, and missed. The next day Mr. Arthur Fowler was on the hill, and, although the stag was so surrounded by hinds that it was impossible to get within easy range, he took a long shot, and was fortunate in bringing down this celebrated and remarkable animal.

In former years, during the early part of the season before the stalking commenced, an excellent day's grouse shooting could be had. One afternoon Lord Armstrong and Mr. Arthur Fowler killed over fifty brace in a few hours, while on another day the latter and Major Holmes bagged eighty-five brace before four o'clock. But recently the grouse have almost disappeared, as well as the white hares which used to abound here. It would form an interesting subject for a future article to discuss the various explanations of this change, and give the reasons which point to its being accounted for by migration. This aspect of the case has not, I believe, been sufficiently studied, the diminution in numbers being almost invariably attributed to disease or wet hatching seasons.

There are few estates where better ptarmigan shooting can be had. Two guns secured twenty brace during the month of November a few years back, and on most of the days when they were out the snow was lying very thick on the high ground, so that several of the birds could not be picked up. The winter shooting varies considerably, woodcock being the principal attraction. Some years they are plentiful, and sometimes the reverse. The best bag was the shooting of eighty-five couple of woodcock by one gun during November and December.

While deer-stalking claims the main interest of a property in which the forest is the central attraction, the record of the river is by no means without incidents that call for special mention. The river Broom, as mentioned above, extends for about four miles from the sea to the Lynn Fall. Mr. Alfred Gathorne Hardy, in his book on the salmon, thus describes it:—'The "Lynn" is one of the most extraordinary pools to fish that I have ever seen. A wild fall dashes into a deep hole between two high rocks, and the fisherman stands high above it on artificial steps cut in the rock, and has to cast a long line to cover it.' Over this fall the salmon can rarely jump, though I have occasionally seen them surmount it, and disappear into the stream above. But this feat is so rare that fishing for salmon above the fall would be an unprofitable occupation.

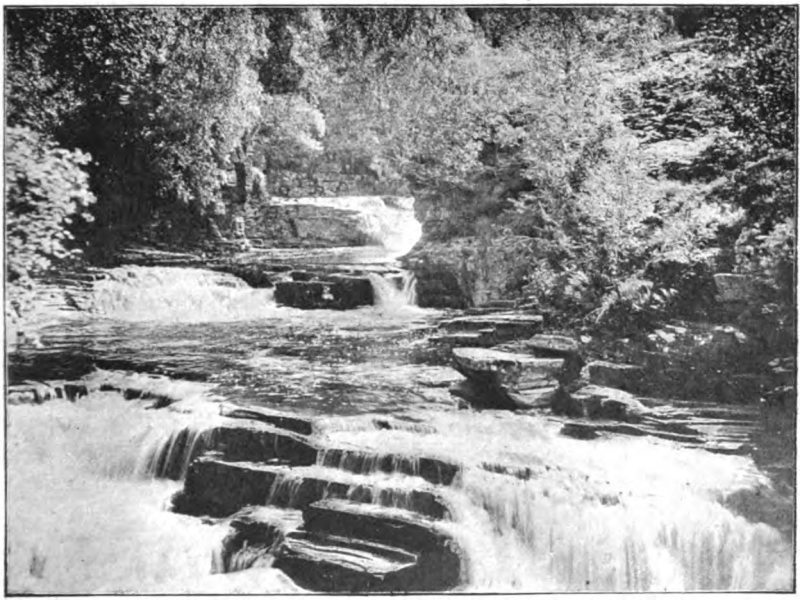
In the illustration on p. 505, Sir John Millais has given a suggestion as 'a necessary precaution for the Lynn Fall.' His host is playing a large fish, but the situation seemed so critical to the artist that he proposed the utilisation of the gaff in the hands of the gillie, penetrating the tail of the fisherman's Norfolk jacket, as a safeguard against accidents. Mr. Hardy graphically relates how a fish, weighing only 16 lb., was foul-hooked in this pool,



A PAGE FROM THE VISITORS' BOOK
Original sketches by SIR JOHN MILLAIS, P.R.A.

and took nine hours to land. When he first rose to the fly, he missed it, but it caught him in the side, half-way below the dorsal fin, so that no purchase could be brought to bear on him. When the persevering guest, who was vainly endeavouring to land it, was absent from dinner, and messengers were sent to inquire what had become of him, the news was brought to the house that he was 'just tied to a fish.'

Major Holmes, whose great achievement in the forest has already been mentioned, was fishing in the Lynn Pool when the river was rather low, and failed to get a rise. Catching a little



THE UPPER PART OF THE LYNN FALL, BRAEMORE

trout hardly bigger than a minnow, he proceeded to troll. A few minutes later a trout about half a pound in weight seized the bait; but before he could be pulled out a large river trout, over 3 lb., bolted the recent comer, and both were landed.

The sketch entitled 'His first fish,' on p. 501, represents the late Rev. J. W. Reeve, Canon of Gloucester, who was for many years the respected Incumbent of Portman Chapel, imploring an ardent but inexperienced fisherman to keep calm, and not to endanger his prospective success by excitement and nervousness. As Canon Reeve was himself no mean proficient in the art of salmon fishing, his advice was given from a practical, and not

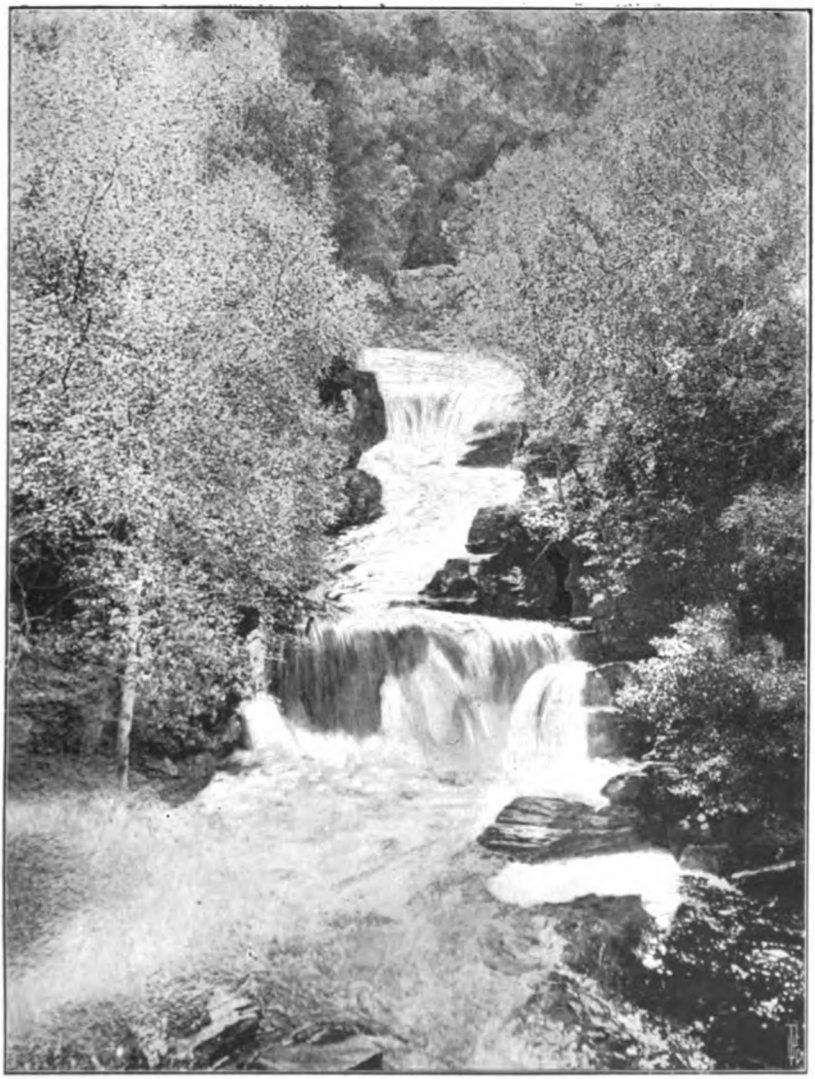
solely from a moral, point of view. The gillie is in the act of gaffing a really fine fish, so we may presume that the ecclesiastical counsel was not without its effect.

The records of Braemore bear out the general belief that fishing is a more favourite pastime with the clergy than shooting. Why this should be so has never yet been satisfactorily explained. The argument, based on the fact that several of the Apostles were fishermen, seems hardly convincing, because, as gunpowder was not invented in their day, they could not, even if they would, have used rifles—and we are not told if there was any game (except wolves) for them to shoot, had they been so disposed. But it is undoubtedly the case that the piscatorial art finds favour with the clergy, and also not infrequently with the bishops. The late Archbishop Magee when Bishop of Peterborough was very fond of a few days' holiday employed in salmon fishing in Ireland, and the Bishop of Bristol is well known as an enthusiastic and skilful angler.

For those who are content with trout fishing, the lochs among the hills afford excellent sport. One of these, Loch Druim, on the road to Garve (the nearest railway station), was, many years ago, enlarged to about double its size by building a bank across the peat bog some half a mile below, and thus damming up the water which flowed into the loch from several small streams. The effect on the quality of the fish, through the provision of fresh feeding grounds, was marvellous. Within two years the average weight, which had formerly been $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{5}$ of a lb., was raised to $\frac{4}{5}$ lb., and the flesh became pink and delicious as that of a sea-trout. The best yield in a day which this loch ever gave was 118 trout, weighing 103 lb.

In one of the most inaccessible portions of the forest, in a deep, basin-like corrie, is a small deep loch (Loch Toll-an-lochain), fed entirely by springs. Into this loch were put, some five-and-twenty years ago, a dozen small trout from a larger loch (Loch-y-Vraon). Seven or eight years later the shepherds, who sometimes cross the corrie, brought tidings of monster fish which they had seen jumping in the loch on a calm evening. Shortly afterwards, at the bottom of a high fall, where the stream running out of the loch descended to the lower ground, a large trout was picked up dead, and when taken home scaled nearly 10 lb This incident aroused the sporting instincts of Mr. Arthur Fowler, who, the following spring, devoted himself to the loch in question, and spent several days at a time in endeavouring to tempt some of these giants to the surface. He was successful in catching a

number of very fine fish, the largest of which weighed 14½ lb. The peculiarity about this 'record' catch was that, though it was



A SHADY SPOT ON THE RIVER BROOM

taken in June, it was full of spawn. On two days in September, 1884, seventeen trout were taken, weighing 30 lb. 13 oz. The

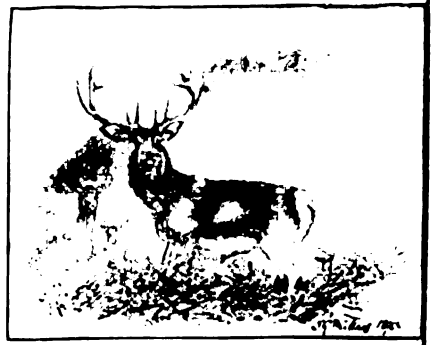
largest of these weighed 5 lb. 13 oz., was 23 in. in length, and 12⅜ in. in girth. The next in size weighed 5 lb. 5 oz., was 22½ in. in length, and 12½ in. in girth. The relative proportions of the various sizes may be compared when it is mentioned that a trout weighing 1 lb. 13 oz. was 16½ in. in length and 9¼ in. in girth. These fish were carefully examined, and beetles, flies, fresh-water shrimps (which abound in the loch), and various other insects were found inside them.

Among the many notable visitors whose names are recorded in the visitors' book, but not in the records of the game book, several may be mentioned here. Sir Roderick Murchison, the great geologist, spent much of his time with his hammer on the shores of Loch Broom, and added considerably to his knowledge of the formations of Laurentian gneiss from his investigations. Sir Richard Owen, the life-long friend of the owner of Braemore, spent many happy months enjoying the beauties of the scenery, and his inimitable power of telling ghost stories, and inventing weird and fantastic tales, in which megatheria and mastodons played a prominent part, was often called into requisition by the ladies of the party.

The late Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Benson) and his family spent a portion of several seasons in this highland retreat, where letters take twenty-four hours to reach their destination, and the telegraph office is six miles from the house, so that he was thus able, to some extent, to escape from the pressure of his incessant correspondence. The Archbishop always enjoyed the description given of him by the forester who lived on the outskirts of the property on the road to the station. He had seen the archiepiscopal party drive past in the afternoon, and had been informing himself as to the personality of the new visitors. Later on, when one of the house party who had been out stalking met him, he asked if any fresh arrivals had gone to Braemore that day. 'Ay, ay,' replied Michael, 'there's one, Benson and his family, just driven by. I'm no rightly sure who he is, but they're calling him "his Grace the Duke of Canterbury," and I'm thinking he's the head meenister from England.'

Archbishop Thomson (of York) was equally fond of the quiet and repose and the varying scenery of this attractive spot. His first visit was paid when the youngest son of the house was quite a small boy. Before leaving the Archbishop and his party entered their names in the visitors' book, the W. Ebor., in his well-known bold handwriting, being written first. The small boy, not being

Names	Arrival		Departure		Remarks
	Date	From	Date	For	
[illegible]	23 Sept.	Inverness	27 Sept.	Inverness	
[illegible]	do	do	do	do	
Charles R. Hunter	4th Oct	Staffin	9th Oct	Staffin	
Nesta Hunter	"	Staffin. I of Skye	"	Inverbroom	
May Renwick	"	" "	"	"	
J. G. Millais	Oct. 11th	Fort George	Oct. 11th	Gusedan	
Camden	Oct 9th	Foich	Oct 11th	London	



A PAGE FROM THE VISITORS' BOOK

Original sketch by J. G. MILLAIS

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versed in the intricacies of episcopal signatures, did not connect the abbreviated Latin for the City of York with the distinguished visitor, and rushed up to his mother, exclaiming, 'You've forgotten to ask the Archbishop to sign!' He was only partially convinced when the matter was explained, as it puzzled him to understand why Ebor. should spell Thomson.

Archbishop Maclagan, the Bishop of Winchester, and the Bishop of Peterborough are among the members of the episcopal bench who have frequently stayed at Braemore. Before he became a bishop Dr. Davidson used greatly to enjoy his days in the forest, and showed himself a keen and successful sportsman both with rod and rifle. Archdeacon Sinclair, a Scotchman by birth and instincts, usually arrives on his tricycle, but does not either stalk or fish.

Mention has been made above of the Corrie Halloch Gorge. It is undoubtedly one of the most magnificent specimens of natural scenery to be found in the British Isles, and the care and skill with which paths have been made and bridges built, so that the most effective views can be obtained of its beauties, greatly enhance the pleasure of visiting this spot. A favourite amusement among the more active of the visitors of both sexes is to ascend the stream, when the water is very low, from the junction with the river Broom to the foot of the 130-feet fall. It requires considerable nerve to climb round and over the slippery rocks, and on nearly every occasion when the expedition has been undertaken some one has slipped and fallen into the pool. But, in spite of the drawbacks, it is well worth enduring the hardships and dangers for the sake of the grand and awe-inspiring view. Imagine standing in or at the edge of a roaring torrent, and looking up, with moss-covered precipitous rocks rising sheer on either side above you, and a narrow strip of sky just visible between the trees which overhang the gorge on either side.

Mention has been made of the large number of trees which have been planted on either side of the strath, or valley, which widens out towards the head of Loch Broom. Every autumn, at the close of the shooting season, Lady Fowler has been in the habit of going out, day after day, accompanied by several foresters, and personally indicating the trees which needed to be cut down, both with the object of thinning the woods, so as to allow the most vigorous trees to have space for expansion, and also in order to obtain peeps of the view through the dense mass of verdure. The trees thus marked were subsequently felled; and

this process, repeated year after year, has added beauty and dignity to the scene.

Had space allowed, a few statistics of the number of stags and salmon killed, the weights, and other details might have been added, and would have been appreciated by sportsmen. But it is hoped that the sketch given of some of the most interesting incidents in the forest and on the river may not be unacceptable to the general reader.

GILLAROO FISHING ON LOUGH MELVIN

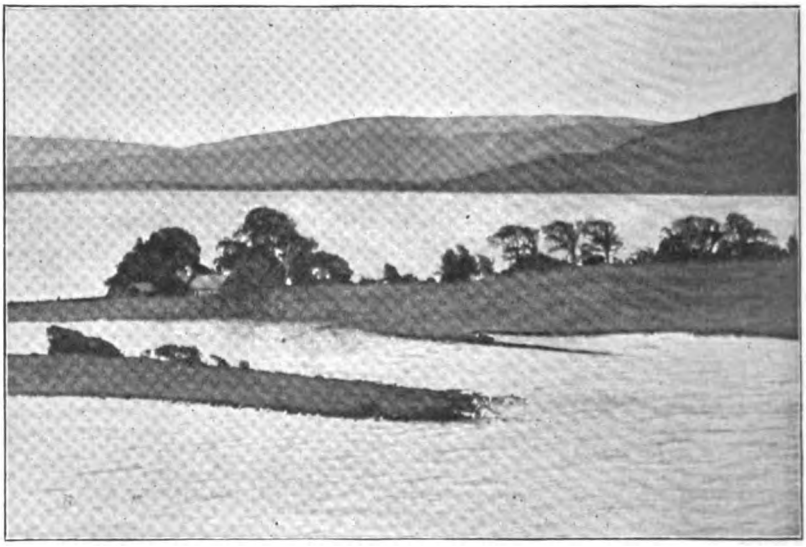
BY W. M. WILCOX

WHAT is a gillaroo? I suppose that is the query which nine-tenths of those who chance to see the heading to this article will ask themselves or their friends, and I fancy I shall be right in supposing also that nine-tenths of those who are asked will be unable to answer the question.

The gillaroo—or, to give its classical name, the *Salmo stomachicus*—is a species of trout. Its distinctive feature is, as the Latin name implies, connected with its stomach, and it is generally described as the fish with a gizzard. Whether this is a true description or not remains as yet unproved, but it is certain that the stomach of this species of trout is unlike that of any other kind. Just as a fowl has the specially strong, muscular stomach, which is generally known as the gizzard, provided for the assimilation and reception of harder substances than other animals, less gifted, care to attempt, so the gillaroo has been fitted out with a similar apparatus to aid its digestion of the fresh-water snail shells which form its staple food.

Dr. Creighton, of Ballyshannon, to whom I am indebted for a great part of my information, says that it is, as yet, uncertain whether the abnormally thick stomach which the fish undoubtedly possesses is due to an increase in the thickness of the normal layer, or to the development of an additional coat. To find anything approaching a parallel to this curious internal formation in a fish we must refer to the grey mullet, which is endowed with a special self-filtering apparatus to enable it to sift out the sand which it swallows in great quantities while feeding.

Externally the gillaroo differs but little from the more common varieties of trout, except that it has a greater number of red spots, and is of a beautiful golden colour when first taken. These colours, however, fade very quickly. The flesh is a deep pink, resembling in hue that of the salmon, and of a more delicate flavour than that of the ordinary trout. Gillaroo are found in large quantities in Lough Melvin, and a so-called gillaroo also inhabits the Shannon and Loughs Corrib, Mask, and Derg, and, according to some authorities, a few of the Scottish lochs; but the inhabitants of the country round Lough Melvin refuse to accept



A VIEW OF MELVIN

these varieties, and are eager to inform strangers that the true gillaroo exists only in their own lough.

Gillaroo breed in the shallows of the lake and in the upper portion of the Bundrowes river which flows out of the lake, but it is uncertain whether they ascend any of the small in-flowing rivers. Like all other trout, they are variable in their rising, but, when on the feed, are most voracious. They lie in very shallow water, and may be taken in the spring on rocky points, in the autumn in sandy bays. In weight the Melvin gillaroo run, as a rule, from half a pound to two pounds; larger fish have been caught, but very rarely. They rise freely to the fly, and in the autumn months very good sport may be obtained by—to use the local

expression—'dapping with the Harry'—the 'Harry' being the countryfolks' synonym for the common daddy-longlegs.

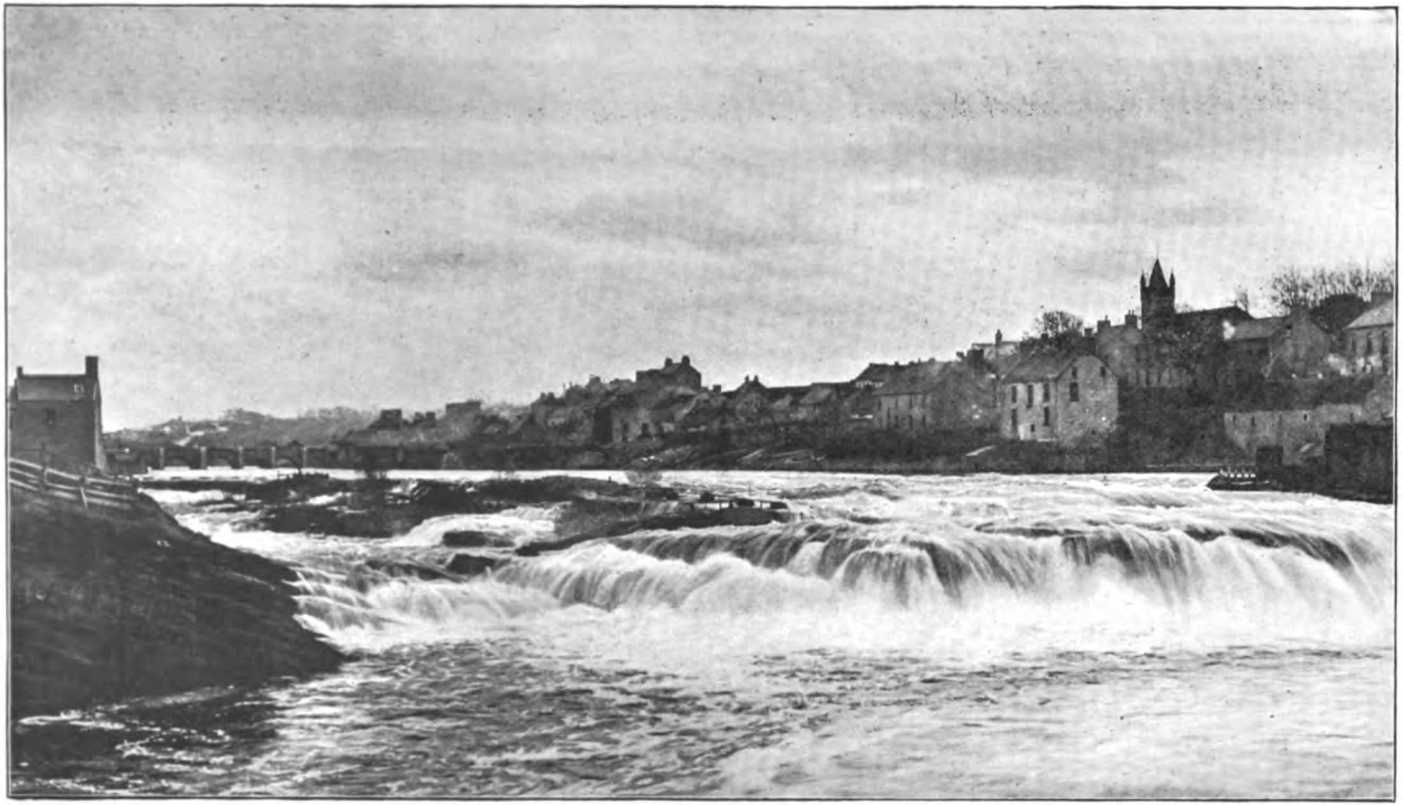
Visitors to the North-West of Ireland, especially if they be in those parts for the purpose of following the 'gentle craft' in the numerous loughs and rivers with which the country abounds, will not be allowed to sojourn there long without hearing marvellous tales of this curious fish. Some of these tales, no doubt, have to be accepted—like a great many fishing stories—with the proverbial grain of salt. But they will hear enough of the voraciousness, of the fierce tiger-like rush at the fly, of the fighting qualities and gameness, as well as of the large baskets that may be taken, to make them—if they be fishermen—long for a closer acquaintance with the gillaroo. We were no exceptions to this rule, and it was with a pleasurable feeling of anticipation that we started early one morning in September to try our luck with the redoubtable fish of which we had heard so much. I often think that half the pleasure of a day's fishing lies in the anticipation of success, and I often wonder what it is that makes a true fisherman so hopeful, even though the conditions are all against his chances of sport. The day on which we started on our fifteen Irish miles' drive for Lough Melvin was almost as bad a day—as far as climatic conditions went—as one could experience; a bright sun, with very little apparent chance of its being covered by the sparse clouds that flecked the horizon; hardly sufficient wind to cause that *sine quâ non* in lake fishing, a ripple; and what little breeze there was, blowing from the east. Surely here were sufficient evils, from a fisherman's point of view, to fill his cup of bitterness full to overflowing! But 'hope springs eternal in the angler's breast,' and thus it was that we mounted that fascinating vehicle, the Irish car, in the highest spirits, and fully determined to deal death and destruction among the Melvin gillaroo. What a delightful drive it was too! How we enjoyed everything! The driver, who was careful to gallop his horse up the hills and *walk* when he got to the top, and who answered '*ouai surelee*' to almost every interrogation we put to him; the barefooted peasantry we met on the road; the hayfields, in which men and women were busy tossing the hay and making it into cocks—for in these parts they don't carry their hay till the end of September, and think nothing of leaving it lying in the fields for three or four weeks at a time; the tiny cabins with their stacks of peat; all these sights were new to us and all delightful. And then the scenery! At the outset intermittent glimpses of Donegal Bay with its mud-flats and islands, and the beautiful Blue-stack hills as a background; then

further inland, mountain and lough in wonderful profusion, the purple-brown tints of the former combining with the deep blue of the latter to make—in our humble opinion—one of the loveliest contrasts in nature.

Far away to the north-west we got occasional glimpses of stern and massive Slieveleague, where, if we can believe all we hear, the fairies hold nightly revel, dancing on bridges of mist across Glencolumbkill to the Rosses. We passed through the quaint little village of Ballintra with its two churches, and one long narrow street, possessing a unique feature in the shape of a large chestnut-tree, which spreads its gnarled branches across

THE ERNE ABOVE THE BRIDGE, BALLYSHANNON

the road, till they almost touch the opposite houses. Ballintra folk are very proud of 'The Bush,' which is pronounced as if it rhymed with 'Hush!' And so to Ballyshannon, where we stopped and changed cars, admiring the while the beautiful falls of the Erne, near the mouth of which the town is situated, and which affords some of the best salmon fishing obtainable in that part of Ireland. Here, too, we took the opportunity of replenishing our flasks—a wise precaution, for Irish boatmen dearly love a 'dhrop of the crathur,' without which they seem to lack that spirit of keenness which is such a material help in showing their employers the best spots. Then on again with a fresh car, and a



THE FALLS OF ERNE BELOW THE BRIDGE, BALLYSHANNON

fresh Jehu, and—I had almost said—a fresh horse, but there must be some reservation about that, till right ahead we could see the long, broken range of the hills at the foot of which lay our promised land. Presently, over-topping a steepish bank, we caught our first view of Melvin, and our spirits rose to fever height as we realised that we had, at last, reached our goal.

Lough Melvin lies just on the boundary line of Leitrim and Donegal. Its southern shore is bounded by a range of hills of which the principal height is Dartrey Mountain. The lake itself runs almost due east and west, is about seven miles long, and from two and a half to three across in its broadest part. Roughly speaking, it is about eighteen miles round; but if one takes into consideration all the numerous creeks and bays, it increases the circumference to some twenty-five miles. Melvin is drained by the Bundrowes river, which flows out at its west end, and runs into the sea close to the little watering-place of Bundoran, which is becoming quite a popular resort for anglers and golfers.

At the east end is the famous fishing village of Garrison, so-called as having been chosen by the English for a military station during the rebellion of 1641. Close here is Belleek, which may be mentioned incidentally as Ireland's one and only Pottery. There is one large island in Melvin, long, narrow, and beautifully wooded; and a low white farmstead, nestling among its numerous trees, adds to its picturesqueness. There are also several 'submerged islands,' as they are called—being long shallows of stone—which form a very favourite haunt of the gillaroo. Most of the fishing is done on the northern side of the lake, though report speaks of fabulous fish lying in the deeps on the south. Besides gillaroo, brown trout and salmon may be taken, and numbers of the fresh-water herring are netted in the late autumn. We had a magnificent view of Melvin, as we descended the hill, on our way to seek out the cabin of the fisherman, one Pat McHugh by name, who had been recommended to us.

We were not long in finding it. 'Faith an' it'll just be the first yez come to on the lift, yer 'annah,' was the direction we received from an intelligent-looking urchin we interrogated. Pat was doing what everyone seemed to be doing at this time, making hay; but evidently rowing a couple of enthusiasts about the lough for four or five hours was more lucrative than hay-making, and he obeyed our summons with alacrity, any regrets he may have had at leaving his crop apparently dismissed with the

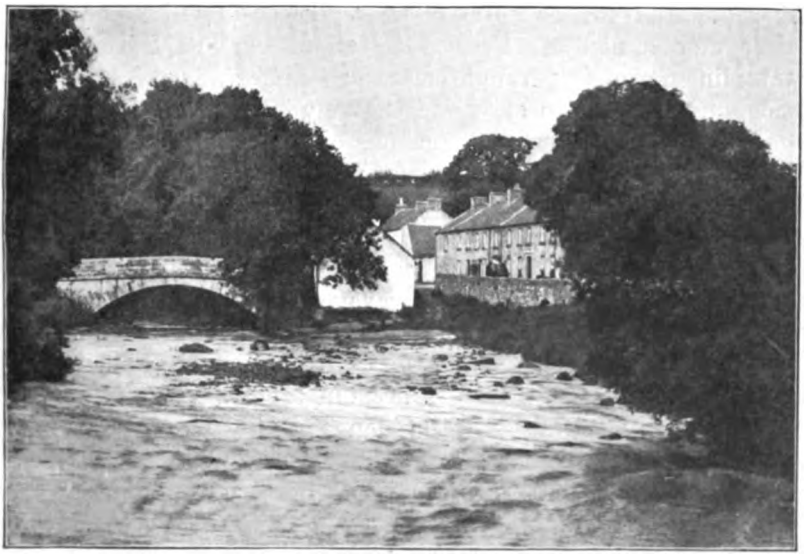
remark, 'Foine wither for the hay, sorr,' with which he greeted us. We agreed, but would have been better pleased had he said it was fine weather for the 'throuts.' We glanced at the sun—it was beating fiercely down from an almost unclouded sky; we eagerly scrutinised the few clouds—that they were moving was just perceptible, but it was from the *east*; we let our gaze wander to the lake—its surface showed up in patches, here and there as calm as the proverbial mill-pool, here and there the tiniest ripple, sparkling diamond-like in the rays of the sun, when a breath passed over the face of the water. Our hearts sank and we turned to the fisherman. 'Is it any use going out

HOTEL GARRISON

to-day?' 'Begorr, yess!' was the emphatic answer; and our spirits rose, though the impulse which dictated the reply was obviously ambiguous.

We walked down the couple of fields which intervened between the fisherman's cabin and the margin of the lake, and proceeded to put our tackle together, and inspect the boat which was to bear us o'er 'the glassy, cool, translucent wave.' It was long and narrow, shaped somewhat after the fashion of a Thames punt, and afforded ample room for two rods—one at either end—and the boatman. We readily lent our assistance in floating the craft, which was lying half in and half out of the water, alongside

a low, narrow wall, composed of loose stones, which stretched out some distance into the lake, and in a very short space of time we were being propelled towards the fishing grounds, trailing the lines in our wake to give them the necessary soaking. Lake fishing, of course, is not to be compared with stream fishing; the two are as different as shooting a rabbit sitting from behind a hedge, and snapping one up as it bolts across a ride. The skill and *finesse* required first of all to hook a trout in running water, and then land him with the weight of the stream as well as the weight of the fish against one, are not brought into play at all in lake fishing, where coarse, strong tackle is used, and where,



HOTEL GARRISON. ANOTHER VIEW

as often as not, the fish saves one the trouble of striking by hooking himself; and then the continual change of scenery, which is such a true charm in river fishing, is lacking on the lake, and the want of it is often felt towards the close of a long and unsuccessful day, when the monotony of the surroundings—beautiful though they may be—is apt to foster irritation.

But, in spite of all this, lake fishing has its own special fascinations; there is something delightful in the openness and sense of freedom in a large sheet of water; it is pleasant not to have to think of obstacles behind in making a cast, and it is a relief to get rid, for a time, of the dread of 'going in' over one's

waders. These are negative advantages, no doubt, but they threw their spell over us as we whipped the waters of Melvin on that bright September morning. Alas! the silver gleam of the gut was plainly visible to our eyes as we drew the line through the water; and if plain to us, how much more so to the keen-eyed denizens of the lake! He must be a very sleepy fish who would mistake the flies dangling from that gleaming streak for legitimate food. Presently, however, a very diminutive cloud, which we had been watching with almost bated breath, stole in a shame-faced manner across the sun, and a slight breeze rippled the surface of the water round our boat; a moment later an exclamation from my companion made me look round. It was only for a second, though, for I did not want to lose any of the precious time afforded us by that thrice-blessed cloud; but I had seen a taut line depending from a bent top which swayed from side to side, quite enough to show me that my lucky friend was into a good fish, and had every chance of securing first blood. The next minute I had ample time to watch the fight, for the sun was beating mercilessly down, as if to make up for lost time, and the breeze had passed on to bestow its favours elsewhere. My friend was slowly reeling in, and the boatman was waiting, net in hand; suddenly the fish with a savage rush began to bore downwards. 'It 'ull be a gillaroo yez have,' said the boatman; the fish stopped and gave three most determined tugs, and then made straight towards us. 'Don't let him take you under the boat,' I cried; my friend saw the danger, and our gallant prey, gradually yielding to the increased strain put upon him, allowed himself to be brought to the surface, where the yawning jaws of the deadly net were waiting to receive him. After the *coup de grâce* had been administered, we examined with the keenest interest our first gillaroo. He was a splendid fish of close upon a pound, and his beautiful golden hues and the brilliancy of his numerous red spots excited our warmest admiration. 'I think we'll drink his health,' said I, unscrewing the top of my whisky flask. Pat evidently had no objection to this phase of the proceedings, for with 'Here's good luck to yez' he drained the stiffish portion proffered him at a gulp, and with a' sigh of content resumed his oars. Having discovered that it was an 'orange grouse' that had lured from his retreat the fish now reposing under one of the seats of the boat, I proceeded to put one on, and very soon we were flogging the water all round us with renewed energy.

Lake fishing is very tiring work for anyone unaccustomed to

it, and it was not long before our arms began to feel like the proverbial lumps of lead, and, to make matters worse, there was nothing to show for it. The sun continued to shine with aggravating vigour, and the surface of the water to preserve its unruffled calm. After about an hour of this state of things, during which we had not so much as seen a fish move, Pat suggested that he should row us to a spot rather more than a quarter of a mile away, towards one of the submerged islands of which mention has been made. We hailed his suggestion with acclamation, glad of a few moments' rest from our labours;

STONE PIER JUST BELOW MC HUGH'S CABIN

and letting out nearly all my line, I placed my rod at the stern of the boat, and sat down to calm my rebellious thoughts with tobacco-smoke. To my surprise, when about half-way to our destination, I heard my reel giving tongue; seizing the rod, I was delighted to see the line tighten, and to feel that at last I had got something on. That something, when I had successfully accomplished the rather lengthy task of reeling up about thirty yards of line, proved to be a brown trout of about half a pound weight; and though I was pleased at having 'broken my duck,' the pleasure was mixed with a certain amount of disappointment that it was not a gillaroo. Pat congratulated me, but I refused to be drawn, and did not offer to 'wet' my capture.

No further luck attended our visit to the submerged island, and after trying all the likely spots we had another adjournment for lunch. Having brought to a satisfying conclusion that very necessary item in a day's fishing, we lit our pipes and began a tour of inspection round the island, keeping at a distance of fifty yards or so from its banks, and casting into the shallows. While occupied in the apparently hopeless task of trying to tempt fish to partake of our flies in absolutely dead water we suddenly came upon a flock of five or six cormorants fishing in a secluded bay; they took flight at our approach, skimming over the surface of the water with their long black necks stretched out, to find a safer hunting-ground on the further shore. It was curious to see these sea-birds on a fresh-water lake. Gulls we saw in plenty, and occasionally a flight of duck or a stately heron could be observed crossing from one point to another, while ever and anon might be heard the weird cry of the curlew. We had ample time to note all these signs of wild life as we skirted the northern shore of the island, for never a fish did we see; but when we had rounded its eastern point, and had begun to make our way along the south side, the truth of the assertion that there is no fixed law as to when trout will take was curiously proved. I was drawing in my line preparatory to making one final cast before relinquishing my rod in favour of my pipe for a time, when I felt a vicious tug, and then 'whirr' went the reel, singing merrily as if it were glad of something to do. What a pleasurable sensation is that first rush of a big fish! How the feeling of elation is mixed up with exciting apprehension lest something should break! That fish—bless him!—thrilled me with delightful sensations for the space of six or seven minutes. Off he went, first in one direction, then in another; then he stood still and tugged; finding that of no avail, he came rapidly to the surface and leapt two or three times out of the water, and we could see what a beauty he was; he then remained quiescent for a few seconds, as if considering what to do next; having apparently made up his mind, he headed straight towards us with a most determined rush, filling my soul with the keenest anxiety lest I should be unable to keep him from taking me under the boat. Finally he went down, tugging all the while, as if resolved to break his fetters, and for a short space I couldn't move him. But there is a limit even to a gillaroo's endurance, and after a moment or two of indecision he came up again, still fighting, but almost played out, and I could see his great yellow belly as he at last turned over in token of submission.

'Begorra, there's a gran' fish!' said Pat, when he had got him safely into the net.

He *was* a grand fish—a trifle under two pounds, and destined to prove the pick of our basket. It was curious that such an one should have been caught, with all the conditions dead against those generally accepted as being necessary to success. We drank his health, this time with three times three, and were proceeding on our way, when a sudden ejaculation from the boatman caused us to look round. He was pointing towards the south end of the lake, and following the direction indicated by his finger we could see huge banks of clouds rising steadily above the distant hills.

'By Jove!' I exclaimed, after a moment, 'the wind has changed!' 'Thrue for you,' said Pat. 'There, she's coming from Kinlough now, yer 'annah; ye'll have yer fill of win' before night.' He was quite right; the wind had gone to the south, and even as he spoke we could see the breeze approaching us in a path of ripples, at first in fitful gusts, and then steadier and stronger. It was a grand sight—from a fisherman's point of view—and our hopes rose high. Presently our boat was rocking in a little sea of ripples; the sun showed intermittently through the clouds, which had come up with almost incredible rapidity; and—best of all—the fish, evidently affected by 'the change' which had 'come o'er the spirit' of the lake, began to move. It was about two o'clock; and from that time till half-past three, when we were due to leave, we had no complaint whatever to make of lack of sport. Pat was kept very busy, alternately rowing and landing our spoils. The fish came at our flies with the greatest fierceness, taking them under water and requiring very little striking. They were all game, too, to the very last gasp, disputing every inch of the way with a tenacity unequalled in any other fish of which we had ever had experience. With the exception of one big fellow, who took himself off together with a couple of yards of my cast, we lost none through our tackle breaking, and we missed very few—they came at us too greedily for that. There is no half-heartedness about a gillaroo when he is on the feed; he takes the fly as if he meant having it—a trait in his character which stamps him at once as a 'sportsman.'

When at last that old sinner, Time, who waits for no man, forced us to tear ourselves away from our entrancing occupation, we found that we had accounted for twenty-one good fish, of sizes ranging from three-quarters of a pound to a pound and

three-quarters, always excepting my champion which I had caught before the conditions had changed in our favour. Considering the number of healths that had to be drunk, it was not surprising that when we reached the shore our flasks were found to contain 'an infinite deal of nothing.'

Being reluctantly compelled to decline Mrs. McHugh's hospitable offer of tea, we mounted our car, and after wishing Pat good luck with his hay, and receiving from him a warm invitation to come again, we started on our long drive homeward, thoroughly satisfied with our first visit to Melvin, and endorsing in every particular all we had previously heard to the credit of the truly sporting gillaroo.

SEPARATOR

BY OSWALD CROWE

THE horses kicked up clouds of dust as they trampled round in the sale yard. The cool champagne air of a North Queensland winter carried it away over the wooden houses of Mackay like a broken column of smoke puffs. Gathered thickly round the yard, and perched on its stout post and rails of split iron-bark, were the horse-drover's ideal of a 'sale-yard' crowd. The only man in the township who did not appear to want a horse was the old town crier. He still clanked at his bell and called out lustily about the sale, but to empty streets. Everybody who could go was at the yard to pick up a good 'un cheap at Tom Brush's sale. Had you asked at the post office for a stamp, or wished to send a wire, a small but innocent child would have assured you that his father had been called out on business, and would be back before very long.

On the chemist's door you would learn that if he was urgently wanted you would find him at the sale yard. The bank managers went, of course all the clerks who could sneak out followed to the yard, and so did everybody else.

Seated on the flat top of the great round gate-post was snowy-haired old John Alexander, the auctioneer, cheeriest of salesmen and a prime favourite. Below him in the small selling-yard, and holding a rough-coated, bony draft colt, was Tom Brush, the man of the day. Five foot four of tough bush manhood, black-bearded almost to the waist, travel-worn with four and a half months' droving over 1,200 miles of badly grassed stock tracks. His black beard was dust colour, and so was every inch of him, from his rusty old leggings and saddle-stained moleskins to his battered old cabbage-tree hat. Pinched and worn in face, but cheery as a lark; for after 1,200 miles, and every

yard of it watchful anxiety, he had reached his goal at last, and his dream of a 'good crowd to sell to' was being realised.

Perched on the cap of the fence and peering through the rails were young overseers from the plantations, Swede, Dane, and German cane farmers, all the townsfolk planters, a few Kanakas 'out of their time,' and last, but not least, the kindest and most extravagant of all horse-buyers—John Chinaman.

Laughter and jokes rained in from the crowd. Tom Brush, with small twinkling eyes, enjoyed it; he smudged the dust and perspiration across his face with his free hand, and answered the chaff about the raw-boned colt.

'Make a dashed fine culvert over Fagin's Creek if he was stuffed,' called a large, stout man sitting on a post.

'Half your stuffin' would bust him, old man,' chirped Tom Brush, and the laugh was with him.

'Dog poor, I know, gentlemen, only hides and bones, but Mr. Brush knew his market when he fetched them here,' charmed the auctioneer. 'A month's spell over the Range and they'd have been mud fat, but that's only wasting time with men that know a good horse, if he's as poor as a rake.'

They were, indeed, in very low condition; 'overlanding' had left its mark. 'Next lot! Now, gentlemen! here's a grand stamp. Don't see his kind every day!' Tom Brush led into the yard a very good-looking chestnut, short-backed and nicely topped, rising six. 'There's a horse to fill the eye, gentlemen!' and indeed he was, as handsome as paint, with plenty of 'quality,' about 15.1, and the very model of a hunter up to fourteen stone. Unlike his ragged-looking mates, he was in capital condition, his coat shone, and he was almost round.

'Look at him, gentlemen! Twelve hundred miles in a bad season, and he looks corn fed. Hard as nails, and fit to carry a man a hundred miles to-day.'

For a few minutes the bidding was keen, then it suddenly stopped. A knowing one had whispered that 'Tom Brush was not the kind to have one fat horse among eighty odd poor ones unless there was a very good reason for it.'

'Done dashed little work on the road over,' said a local dealer in Tom Brush's hearing.

'The man don't live that'll ride that cove poor. Take a steel man to get to the end of him,' retorted Tom.

'I'm thinkin' it would,' said the local dealer dryly; but honour, even among horse-dealers, restrained him from further audible conjectures.

'And twelve pun' he goes for. Twelve ten—ten—ten—ten, thirteen.' The auctioneer's eye was on a young man in a very horsey 'get-up'—a new importation—and at the same time receiving bids from an imaginary person at the back of the crowd. The invisible bidder ran the horse up to 16*l*. At 16*l*. 10*s*. the good-looking chestnut fell to the horsey young gentleman.

'Yours, Mr. Blayton, and a grand horse.'

It was a condition of sale that every saddle horse should be ridden before delivery to show that he was quiet. Somehow, Tom Brush omitted this with the chestnut—mere forgetfulness, of course.

'You're not the kind wants the starch took out of his for 'im,' Tom Brush said, taking a grave head-to-foot glance at the perfect horseman.

'Well—er, no, don't matter,' said Mr. Blayton.

'Wouldn't bother you one straw if he did "root" a bit. A cove that *can* ride ain't like one of them flat-headed Germans or Chinkees that can't sit a fence.'

The matter-of-course tone of Tom Brush's estimate told at once. For Blayton the riding test was of course absurd, and it did really seem ridiculous that little Tom Brush should be required to take the 'rough edge' off a horse for such a perfect-looking horseman.

'Let's see,' said little Tom Brush, stroking his dusty beard thoughtfully. 'You're at the Brambles? No? At Saulton's—same thing. I've six daft colts to deliver there; I'll take the chestnut out same time this evening.'

Blayton, with a few of his friends, stood admiringly round the chestnut. 'Such a kind horse, so quiet, so different from those New England scrubbers and brumbies.' They caught him so easily in the yards, patted him and stroked him, and English fashion passed their hands down his legs to feel for the splints that never grow on Australian bush legs.

. . . . . .

There was a gathering on the verandah of the 'bachelors' quarters' at Saulton's plantation the next morning, when it was known that Blayton was going to put a saddle on his splendid new chestnut. He was so quiet, just a light snort or two as he came up the verandah, and a slight shrinking as the saddle was placed lightly on his back, then he was girthed up and led round the 'megassé' yard. It seemed a needless precaution for Joe, the bullock driver, to hold him by the ear for Blayton to mount, for the chestnut was not in the least alarmed; and why should he be?

He stepped off turning the big snaffle over contentedly in his mouth, when, as if he had suddenly forgotten something, down went his head, and in the same contented way—nobody knew exactly how it was done, it was such a gentle, easy buck—Blayton was deposited on his back on the soft megassé, and the chestnut trotted off to some cart-horses standing loose at the far corner of the yard. A shout of delighted laughter from the Kanaka boys brought the engineers and sugar-boilers to the mill windows to see what the joke could be they were all enjoying so at the 'quarters.' Such a childish spill, it seemed to Blayton; there was surely nothing so ridiculously easy as remounting and staying there, so the chestnut was brought back.

Blayton was up again at once, and with just a shade more purpose in his bucking the chestnut laid him out as before, on his back on the megassé.

The quarters were delighted with the encore. It was indeed very strange. There was nothing vicious or bad-tempered about the horse. His large, kindly eye only dilated a little as he was led a third time; for Blayton was still determined to get up and stay there.

'Wet the saddle! Put on a Johnny strap! Put your hooks on and go into him!' called the verandah, and work almost ceased at Saulton's to see the third time of asking.

Blayton was warm now and meant a fight. The saddle was wetted, Joe, the bullock driver, ran a strap from D to D across the gullet-plate for a good hold. There was a good gallery, too, which always helps good fighting. In build, Blayton was the 'cut' of a rider, and doubtless made one in time but he lacked the practice, grip, and balance only acquired in boyhood. A third time he was up; this time he rode out warily, taking a good stout switch. Down went the chestnut's head for buck one, a mild one; two, with feet all under him and head out of sight. He bucked straight up, and landed on all-fours with such a jarring thud that Blayton's eyes watered. Three, up and down again, harder than before, Blayton still there, but shaken slightly forward; the chestnut felt it, and measured his stroke accordingly. With a bunched-up jump, half sideways and backwards, he shot Blayton a dozen feet over his off shoulder, this time in a wobbly ball. 'Ha! He! Hi! Yah!' shouted the Kanaka boys, and there was a rush from the verandah to pick up Blayton.

'I think,' said Blayton with a gasp—for he had lost some wind—and shaking the megassé out of his hair, 'I think I'll go into breakfast now, and try him again later.'

HE SHOT BLAYTON A DOZEN FEET OVER HIS SHOULDER

'Ten minutes interlude for refreshmong!' called the junior overseer.

'It's that side derleevery that bothered ye,' consoled old Mac, the Scotch engineer, with a twinkle. 'Ye sot her fine on "simple;" ut was when she put herself on "comp'und" that ye leaft her; ye'll have to learn the "comp'und."'

Blayton, still combing dry megassé out of his hair and shaking it out of ears and eyes, straightened himself. 'Hang the brute! I'll sit him yet, though!'

It was Joe who pointed out the cruellest cut of all. With a jerk of his thumb over his shoulder, he said, 'Bin takin' stock of yer all the time,' and they all looked towards the homestead verandah, where the Miss Saultons, with field glasses, had thoroughly enjoyed the contest.

'Never mind, Blayton, she'll be richt enough when ye've learned her at "comp'und." An' what'll ye be callin' her?' asked old Mac at breakfast. But Blayton was not in the humour for pretty or suggestive names; only a very bad one, or rather an ugly one, escaped him, and seemed to appease him.

'How—how would "Separator" do?' suggested the junior overseer, referring to a very important part of the sugar machinery. Separator caught on, and so was Blayton's horse known for ever afterwards.

It was after working hours that Joe, the bullock driver, a New England native, appeared at the verandah steps to solicit the honour and pleasure of a 'seat on Separator.' Joe was an old hand at the game, and his fame drew a very full house; all Saulton's, in fact, as spectators.

'Don't say I'm goin' to stop aboard, Mr. Blayton, but if he parts me he's no commoner. They say Tom Brush never rode 'im for pastime, and Tom's the best man ever I seen on a rough 'orse.'

Joe, in saddling, took every precaution known to buck-jumper riders, in which Separator seemed to share a placid, kindly interest. There was double surcingle in case the girth straps 'busted,' a wet saddle-seat, and a 'kid' (a short, stout stick strapped across the front of the saddle), an additional security for the thighs when the 'rocking' becomes severe.

The gentlemanly chestnut yawned and then shook himself as Joe led him out into the middle of the yard. Something prompted Separator that it would save time with Joe to go into 'comp'und' at once, and he did.

It was a rare good tussle. With all his screwings, jarring

bucks, sideways, backways, and frontways, the chestnut kept to within a few feet of the same ground. The pride of Saulton's in their 'bullocky' rose high. 'He could "sit" and no mistake.' He gave Separator his head and flailed into him. Rained it on him with a belly-winding supple-jack, 'Ker-wak-wak,' right and left real rib-roasters punctuating every buck.

'Joe's collared him! Good lad, Joe! Sock it on to him, Joseph, my son.'

It looked now as if the chestnut must tire. Hard as he was, the sweat was glistening on him in tiny speckles.

'Hooray, Joe's got him!' But suddenly the chestnut changed his tactics; there were grand flying bucks, all the world knows how delightful and easy they are to sit, like going off spring boards and alighting on them again, clearing twenty feet at a spring, then a sudden jerking, crouching 'prop,' as if the horse had struck a wall, and the New Englander, saddle and all, made a short, rapid flight through the air, sending up a splash of dry megassé where he lit. All Saulton's shouted applause.

'That's the "Pan ejector,"' quoth Engineer Mac as the shouts and laughter subsided.

'A bit too good at the game for what I call a nice Sunday hack,' said Joe, a few minutes later, plumping his saddle down on the verandah, and patting the chestnut. 'I reckon he'll sling any saddle, Mr. Blayton.' And to show there was no unworthy vindictiveness between two such doughty champions, Joe passed his hand regretfully over the weals on the chestnut's ribs. 'No mistake, 'e's a picture cut of a horse. Give you ten notes for him, Mr. Blayton. No? Make a fine wager horse, backin' 'im against the flash coves who think nothin' can sling them; pick up a note or two with him that way. Or you could throw a leg over him yourself and get a bit of practice. Learn you fine!'

'An' she'd make a verra sincere teacher,' endorsed old Mac.

'Do splendidly to lend Knox of the Brambles; he's always coming over here to borrow a horse,' benevolently suggested the junior overseer.

'No, don't sell him, Mr. Blayton; try him in harness, make a lovely dog-cart horse.'

Many were the satirical congratulations Blayton received, but he turned the laugh on his deriders. A week or two later he picked up a light dog-cart dirt-cheap, and Separator made the very perfection of a tandem leader.

It was certainly the dandiest turn-out in the district, and the envied of many plantations; so thus was Blayton's 'horse' repu-

tation somewhat restored. Besides, Separator paid for his corn in many other ways. Knox of the Brambles, the notorious horse cadger, came, borrowed, and was bruised; and as 'horse cadger' Saulton's knew him no more. Then, too, as Joe had predicted, he was safe backing (in the financial sense) against the 'flash coves' at the annual rough-riding contests at the show.

All this happened in the days when sugar 'paid,' and Saulton had just built himself a new homestead. Mrs. Saulton at once insisted upon having a proper house-warming, and everybody came, including a squatter or two from over the range. Blayton would much rather these last had remained at their stations, for one of them, Tim Ashley, had the impertinence to be in fatal agreement with himself as to the incomparable charms and fascinations of Molly Saulton. It was a spirited and 'most delightful' dance, on a cool, fresh night, and the large verandah that ran right round the house made a capital overflow ballroom. To-night Blayton was not having a good time, and it did not cheer him to see that Tim Ashley decidedly was. There was the added aggravation that Tim Ashley might be hanging about and spoiling Blayton's chances for another fortnight at least. He had just come down with a draft of his own fat cattle and sent all his horses back to the station. He said he was only waiting for a steamer to take him south for his annual holiday.

It was just before the party was breaking up that the belated mailman rode up and caught sight of Ashley on the verandah.

'That you, Mr. Ashley? dashed lucky I sighted you. The Highlander's comin' down a banker, and the water's backin' up your flats already; didn't think I'd get through past Topdale's myself.' The mailman, an old stockboy of Ashley's, knew well what this 'backin' up' the flats from the Highlander in flood threatened.

To Ashley it meant that, unless he could get back to shift quite the most valuable half of his stock, he would lose every hoof in the flood. He *must* get back, and at once, too. To do this he must borrow a horse, and a good one, to cover a hundred and twenty miles before the following night. True, his partner was at the station; but he was literally a sleeping partner, willing enough, but a poor bushman. It would be quite beyond his powers to muster up and shift the stock on to the high ground out of harm's way. His old stockman was away on a holiday, and the black boys were useless without a leader.

'What's the matter? Nothing wrong, I hope?' asked his host.

'Wrong enough, confound it! Whoever would have dreamed that the Highlander would have come down as late in the season as this? Just a bare chance of being able to save matters if I can only get across something really good to carry me and start at once.'

'Oh, if it's a horse, I can lend you an animal that will take you to Bolton's, and he'll mount you on from there.'

But the track by Bolton's meant a round, and a fatal delay of quite half a day.

'Thanks, very much, but Bolton's won't do;. I must cut straight from the top of the Range to my out-station at Old Rockton—that's just about a hundred—and I'm sure to find something in the paddock there to take me on the odd twenty.'

'Offers of nags to do a hundred, and over the Range country, are just a bit scarce, Tim,' said Saulton dryly. 'Who'll lend Ashley a mount to do a little hundred-mile canter?' called Saulton.

'I will; I'll lend you a quad that'll do it, if you can sit him,' called Blayton, with a suspicion of a jeer.

'Not your horse; not Separator? That's madness!' interfered Mrs. Saulton, with a menacing wave of her palm-leaf fan.

'Why not? What's the matter?'

'Why not? Why, what's the matter with him?' asked Ashley, keenly. 'Oh, that bucking fraud! Well, he'll have to do if there's nothing else.'

'What a generous offer!' said Miss Molly Saulton. 'Why, nobody has ever ridden him yet.'

'Well, it's losing a couple of thousand head of cattle if I don't,' said Ashley, shortly. 'One can put up with a rough canter for that. D'you think he can see the distance out, Blayton?'

'Double the distance, if you can stay on him.' Blayton anticipated a very satisfactory finale to his evening; either Ashley would reconsider, or Separator would 'distribute' him before a very brilliant gallery, and either contingency was pleasing.

'And you don't mind my gruelling him? Well, that's awfully good of you!'

'Won't gruel him very much,' remarked Blayton, and the men laughed, while the generous Blayton thought pleasantly of the 'rare rocketer' in store for the 'hated rival.' 'Tell you what, Ashley,' he added, to make the 'rocketer' a certainty, 'if you get him to Rockton I'll make you a present of him.'

'Done! That's a bargain with you, my boy.' Perhaps in cold blood and in cold matter-of-fact daylight, with no Molly

Saulton or the other women to see him, being a fairly sane man with a fair allowance of common sense, he would have placed Blayton's offer at its true value, and chanced losing the half-day by the round to Bolton's. But it was different now. He disappeared for a few minutes and returned prepared for the road.

'We're all going to wait and see the start, the conquest of Separator,' said a vivacious little lady, a planter's wife.

Then Separator appeared, led over by the horse-boy, and everybody admired him as he glanced up wisely at the Chinese lanterns and the bright, laughing party on the low verandah.

Ashley carried down his saddle with the stirrups clanking down the steps after him.

'Such a lovely horse. What a pity he's so wicked!' said the little planter's wife, leaning over the verandah rail to get a good view of the saddling. Like many young squatters, Ashley was his own horsebreaker at Rockton, and knew well the virtues of the Mexican surcingle he adjusted with such care.

'Just simply madness,' jerked out old Saulton encouragingly; but it was midnight or after, and the English have a weakness for mad performances at that hour.

Ashley mounted, and there was a faint little cry from the verandah as Separator, at once, and in his very best style, 'went to market,' without any formal preliminaries, and bucked away into darkness.

'By gad! right into it, straight for the wire fence!' said half a dozen voices in one breath. There was the crash of a breaking post, and an indistinct mass of horse and rider came heavily to the ground.

'I'm all right!' called Ashley from the semi-darkness. 'Not sure the horse is! Yes, he's right,' and they heard the rattle and twang of released wire as the horse struggled and kicked himself free. 'Stay where you are; don't come out!' called Ashley. A paper lantern flared up and showed him in the saddle and Separator on his legs. The lantern was put out and they lost sight of him. 'Now we're off!' They heard hoof-beats on turf for a minute, and then, farther off, the sound of a horse swinging along the road at a striding gallop.

'Well, I'm properly blowed!' blurted out Blayton.

'Nothing to what your pretty gee-gee will be before Mr. Ashley has done with him,' said the little lady, and there was a laugh and almost a cheer.

'Got him going, at any rate, and nobody ever did that before. Might get through after all,' ventured old Saulton.

Molly Saulton, pale and quiet as a mouse, hidden behind her mother, heard those hoof-beats for many a long day. She hurried to the further end of the verandah and peered out into the darkness, listening intently for the last of them. They were *galloping* when she last heard them, still striding away, but were soon out of earshot. It was murder, sheer murder, to lend him that horse, and I fear me that bright-souled little Molly Saulton would have passed sentence of death on Blayton that evening.

Then everybody drove home, and a few wondered whether Tim Ashley was still going, or whether he was lying a 'shutter-load' on the road.

One thing well known to Ashley Blayton had not yet learned —the most irreclaimable of buck-jumpers does not like bucking in the dark, and doubtless Separator, after his crash into the wire fence, with its cuts and bruises, thought it would at least have been wiser to wait till he got used to the light, instead of bucking straight away from the glare of the lanterns into black darkness; but he was sent along at a pace that gave him enough to do to keep going on the road, without regretful reflections.

Ashley hardly drew rein till he had covered the ten miles to the foot of the great dividing coast range. When he did pull into a walk it was to leave the regular main road that zigzagged up the mountain, round spurs and cuttings at an easy gradient for the steep direct track, 'the old road' that mounted straight up a spur. 'Take him all his time to keep his feet without bucking here; stands as good a chance of breaking his own neck as mine if he does,' thought Ashley grimly.

The darkness under the shadow of the Range and its tall timber was almost cavelike in its blackness, and it felt oppressively lonely. In places the 'old road' was almost a scramble. Separator reached out for his head, and was granted it, not to buck—here he was fairly on parole—but to sniff for the track, which he kept unfalteringly. 'Riding an outlaw on the Range when it's as dark as the inside of a cow don't seem like a strawberry picnic,' mused Ashley. Now the dare-devil excitement of the start had worn off, but the stake was a heavy one and well worth the chances he was taking. If the floods were first in the race it meant 'blue ruin,' for the banks would never help him again; and then think of the shattering of certain newly formed hopes of 'the girl he'd left behind him.' 'Eighty odd miles of bush track, a hundred to one against meeting a soul on it, and the "boss" buck-jumper of the district to do it on.' It was

what they would call 'a steep contract' in America. It seemed darker than ever; the silence was broken by Separator's panting and the rattle of the stones he kicked down the mountain side behind him. The long, steep climb ended with a scramble of some yards to the main road. 'A good 'un, by gad he is,' as the chestnut negotiated this with two or three springy bounds like a cat, and at once stepped out on the level ground with the fine free walk of a really game, willing horse. 'Corn-fed and in rare buckle too.' Ashley noticed his 'bellows were mended' after the long climb, and his breathing quietened before he had walked a dozen yards. 'He'll do the distance, I'll swear, *if* he'll only behave like a gentleman.'

At the top of the Range he left the main road, thence onward it was only a bush bridle track, but he knew every yard of the way. Once on the upper plateau of undulating ridges the timber was lighter, and the sky seemed to brighten. All night he pushed on at a lively pace. To swing along a bush bridle track at a canter through timber and up and down ridges and in and out of steep creeks was surely taking liberties with a gentleman of Separator's reputation, and lessening the chances of a whole neck at daybreak; just then, however, neck risks were a drug in the market.

Day was breaking at last. The sky was lightening and the stars behind him were paling. It was broad wide-awake day when he pulled up at Smoke-stack Creek. A dissipated dingo faced him on the opposite bank, eyed him for a minute, then dropped his tail and scuttled just as the first old 'Jack' broke out into joyous cackles at the dingo's poor nerves.

'Deserve your breakfast, and I believe it's going to be *pax* between us, old man,' Ashley said, as he pulled off the saddle and hobbled Separator with a stirrup leather. He pecked away at the contents of his saddle pouch, while Separator mowed hungrily at the long coarse grass. Now and again the horse paused, looking up from the belly-high grass with cocked ears and a kindly inquisitive eye at the man who had been his nightmare, munching away reflectively, with long grass wisps hanging from his mouth. He took a keen interest in the man, and seemed quite pleased to know him by daylight.

'You're a good horse gone wrong,' reflected the man as he stretched himself on the long grass, noticing that Separator was no colt in hobbles, but moved about without tripping or lifting both legs together like a young 'un. 'Took to bucking late in life and found it pay,' was Ashley's comment. It would

have been interesting to know what the horse thought of the man.

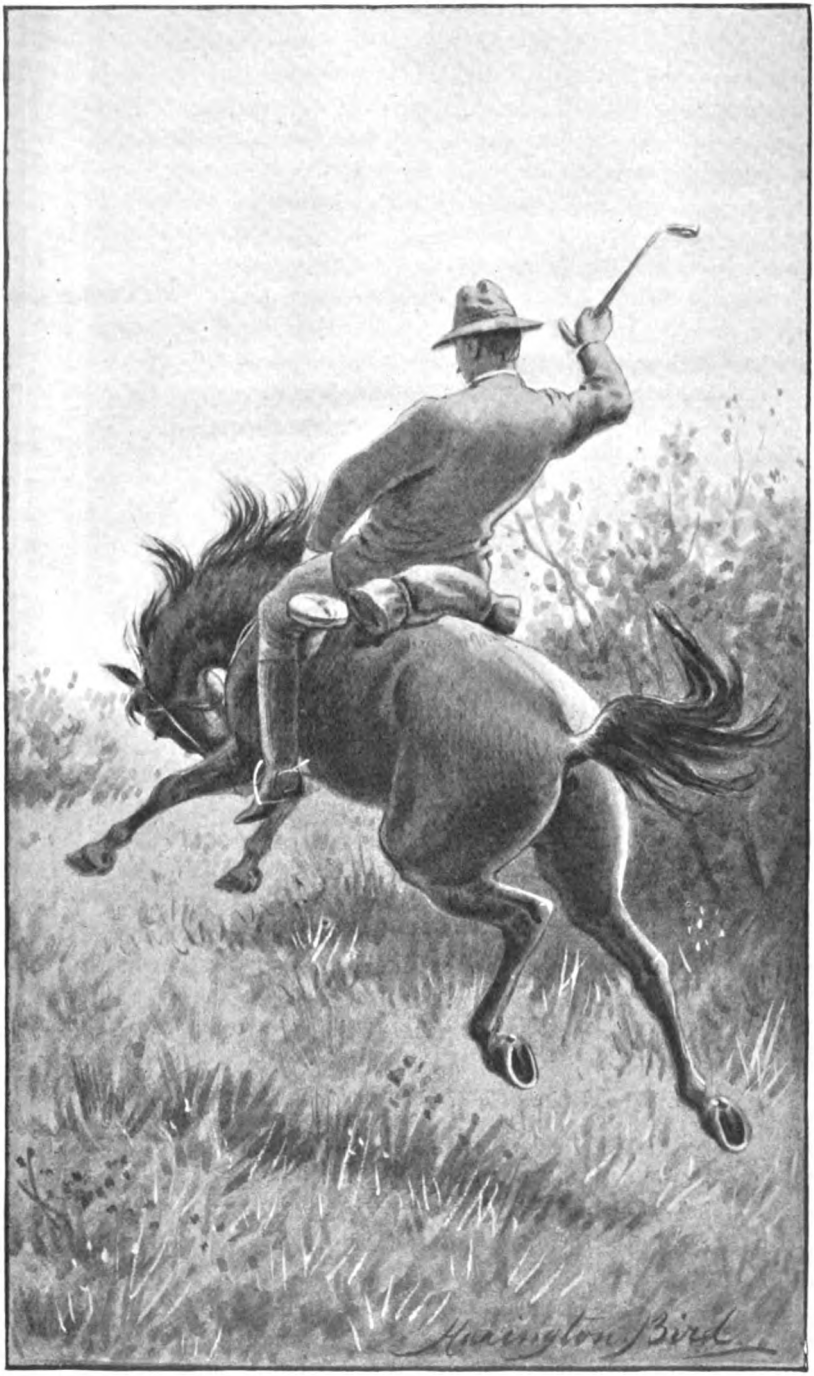
'What an honest, calm-eyed old beggar it is,' mused Ashley, 'and how quiet!' for Separator was browsing round in the most friendly way, hardly his own length from Ashley's legs.

'Time's up, my sonny.' Ashley closed his watch with a snap, put it back in his belt pouch, and proceeded to saddle-up. 'Pretty far from anybody, a thousand to one against anybody's passing to pick me up, so it is just as well to prepare for squalls,' and he hitched the end of the raw hide lacing of the 'Mexican' within comfortable reach of his hand.

He mounted, and to his relief Separator stepped off like a good horse without any 'behind thought.' He swung into a canter, but had barely covered a mile when 'war was declared.' With hard, fierce, determined bucks Separator bounded off the track into the high grass, and Ashley found that he had to sit. Six hours' fast travelling had taken a shade of powder out of Separator's fighting, but certainly not more, and he put his whole soul into 'hard, honest bucking.' All things considered, there could not have been a more even match. Separator's well-merited reputation as a cunning fighter was more than set off by his previous exertions, and Ashley was a horseman in the most complete sense of the term. The best of the 'Mexican' is that, besides affording the rider something of an additional hold, the least slackening of the surcingle can be immediately taken advantage of by pulling on the soft green-hide lacing.

Separator was fighting hard. 'You brute!' shouted Ashley. The compound, the sideways, the screw and backwards, he tried like any fencing-master. Ashley, roaring, swearing, and driving in his spurs at every buck, was hauling in on the lacing of the 'Mexican,' taking in every inch which slackened.

'Is the beggar ever going to stop?' Then away he went with the great flying forward bucks which had 'bested 'Joe. Now his last *coup*; saddle and all must go. Whoop! one fly, but the 'Mexican' was cutting him in half, the saddle-tree must go. Two! now the third great flying leap, and then with a crash he lit on a dead poplar gum hidden by the high blady grass, and rolled ignominiously on to his head while Ashley spun away unhurt, still holding the reins, his fall luckily broken by a great grass tussock. The man was up first, and into the saddle before the horse could get to his feet. A spank of the hand on his quarters, and Separator sprang up and walked away as if nothing had happened, thinking—for horses think, there is not the shadow



AWAY HE WENT WITH THE GREAT FLYING FORWARD BUCKS

of a doubt—all sorts of terrible and puzzling things. 'This man must be something uncanny. He rode me all night in the dark, when nobody ever dared ride me by daylight before.' Twice only had they differed, and each time he had been worsted. Clearly this wanted thinking over; this rider knew more than was contained in Separator's philosophy.

'Try again, old man; we'd better have it out while we're on the job,' Ashley said, taking Separator short by the head; but that noble animal merely strode away at his springy, gliding canter. Many times later during the day he suddenly raced off the track and 'shaped,' but there was no longer any real fire in his fight, a shout or even a swear-word was enough to bring him to his senses. Ashley's only fear was that the outlaw would take too much out of himself with his useless fighting, and knock up before he reached Old Rockton. He could see that already the creeks were rising with the backwater from the river, and time was short.

'"Knock up" is not in his dictionary,' thought Ashley exultantly, as just at sundown he came to the paddock fence of Old Rockton out-station. 'There's something up your sleeve yet, old man!' He scanned the small horse paddock keenly in the waning light, and blessed his luck, for Whitefoot, an old favourite, was in there.

No 'beer and gruel,' English reader, for the horse that has done his hundred miles on end, no dressing and careful rub down, and loose-box, &c. A kindly slap on the quarters from Ashley as he put him through the slip panels was all the attention the conquered Separator received.

'He'd go the whole distance, but he's done enough.' The chestnut made a hungry snatch or two at the grass, and stepped off gaily down the paddock in search of company.

With a fresh horse, the most delightful relief to a tired horseman, Ashley was not long in covering the twenty miles to Rockton head-station, where, swinging open the paddock gate and cantering up the pebbly ridge, he surprised his little partner at a late supper.

'What, Tim! you or your ghost? What the dickens has brought you back? Thought you were half way to Brisbane!'

'Well, old chap, we stand to lose every hoof on the lower flats, two thousand head—close up—unless—unless we can get down there and clear them off by the first streak of day—which we'll do, please God! Thanks, I can do a nip to begin with, and I'll lay in a square one as a preparation for to-morrow.'

Ashley gave a short account of his ride as Bradford hewed him some good fair rounds of silver-side. 'I shook hands with myself, I can tell you, old man, when I said good-bye to him at Old Rockton. He's a rare bit of stuff to do both the distance and the bucking; a most determined scamp; had to watch him every yard of the road after daylight, and that's fatiguing, I can tell you. It was joy to swing along and go to sleep on old Whitefoot.' Little Bradford, eyeglass fixed, sat like a note of admiration.

. . . . . .

It was late the following afternoon, and the very last of the cattle were being swum across Deep Creek from the flats, already nearly girth-deep in water.

'Another four hours and we could not have done it.' They had been hard at it since daylight, sweeping over the flats, splashing and swimming after cattle and horses. Every hoof had been crossed over the creek and put through the fences on to the ridges. This was the last lot, and after putting them through the fence they dismounted, made a blazing fire, and enjoyed a pot of tea as their clothes dried, clothing themselves for the time in smoke as a defence against the mosquitoes and sand-flies.

'That's something for you to allow, Tim,' said Bradford in reply to Ashley's admission that for once he felt baked. 'Shouldn't be surprised if your chestnut wasn't dead after the gruelling you gave him.' Ashley thought not, but a black boy was despatched to bring him to the station next day, when, excepting some honourable scars from spur-digs, he looked none the worse.

. . . . . .

There were extraordinary floods that year. Rockton head-station itself was flood-bound, a thing which had never occurred before in the memory of man, white or black.

When there is nothing to do but watch the yellow flood-marks, and when even the ridges are so boggy that they will not bear a horse's weight, well, there's nothing for it but to stay at home and smoke, read, and work green hide or play euchre or whist till a general liver insurrection makes devilment of some kind or another a necessity.

It chanced that there were two or three other flood-bound men there, and on this particular afternoon pent-up devilment would not be denied.

Dunstan, of Phantom Downs, was the moving spirit. He would chaff poor little Jack Bradford about his horsemanship, and about his bushmanship generally. Bradford, he estimated, averaged about six croppers at every muster, would be bushed

anywhere on the run half a mile from the creek, couldn't tell a bullock from a horse at a hundred yards away without his eyeglass, and two hundred yards away with it, and many other things which really did Bradford scant justice. When everybody is bored, rum is plainly the antidote, and, as Ashley was ever hospitable, the boredom was alleviated. Bradford listened cheerfully, and admitted many of the soft impeachments till his riding was questioned, and then, as it was notoriously his very poorest accomplishment, he rose fiercely.

'Anyhow,' chaffed Dunstan, 'I'd just like to see you on that chestnut gentleman Ashley rode up.'

'And so you shall; you've only got to make it worth my while.' Bradford sat up in his chair and glared through his eyeglass, manfully taking up the challenge. 'I'll lay you an even "fiver" I ride him.'

'Done. In the big yard, and stay on him ten minutes by the watch.'

Brown, from the Mackenzie, and Porteous, dropped their books and looked up hopefully. Here was something at last to break the monotony. They would all lay even money on the chestnut.

'Even money, indeed!' Bradford demanded odds, five to two, and got them.

'You duffer, Bradford,' called Ashley; 'leave it alone. Why, it's safe money to them at a hundred to two. Hang it! I wouldn't back myself to do it. I only bossed him by a fluke.'

'Shut up, Ashley! Don't spoil sport,' dissented the layers.

'All wagers chargeable to my estate if I break my neck. Hang it, Ashley, anybody would think I'd never had a cropper in my life,' said Bradford, and nobody contradicted this.

A black boy on foot drove the horses splodging and splashing ever the soft ridges to the yard; and little Bradford, with a huge rough-riding saddle on his head, led the way to the arena where he had undertaken to 'catch, saddle, ride, and remain ten minutes by the watch on Separator.'

'Seems quiet enough to handle,' remarked Dunstan. 'I suppose that is the horse? Bradford don't mean to do us, I know, but then he don't know a horse from a panel of fencing.'

'That's the horse all right.' and Ashley took a seat beside the others on the cap rail, watching Bradford saddling up the great buck-jumper. Bradford finished, and led the horse out to the middle of the yard to mount.

There was a low laugh among the wagerers as he shortened the reins up.

'Aren't you going to——' began Ashley, but was interrupted

by a chorus from the others. 'Shut up, Ashley! Hi! fair does. Let him alone, it's his mount.'

'What's up?' asked Bradford, looking round, taking Separator by the ear.

'Oh, nothing, nothing. Go on, up with you,' called Dunstan. 'By the way, Brown, you and Porteous might field out wide for a good catch.'

'Time!' called Dunstan to Ashley with the watch, as Bradford put his leg cautiously over the saddle and settled himself; but to everybody's surprise the chestnut walked round the acre of herding yard as sweetly as a prize hack on show day. Walked round and round, stepping out freely, and looking about him in the kindliest way, passed round and under their noses, aggravating the 'takers' with his gentlemanly behaviour. Their faces lengthened.

'Well I'm blowed! This looks a bit doubtful. Now canter him, Bradford;' their bets were looking blue.

'Don't you! It's not in the wager,' called Ashley, and he wondered why the horse was so quiet. It dawned on him just then.

'Canter him? Rather!' called Bradford cheerfully, and Separator broke into the smoothest of lady canters.

'You ass!' called Ashley, bitterly regretting having had the run out so early in the afternoon, expecting every moment to see Separator begin one of his well-known 'senders.' To Ashley's disgust, feeling safer every minute, Bradford began to take liberties with the horse; but he was not to be moved out of his good behaviour.

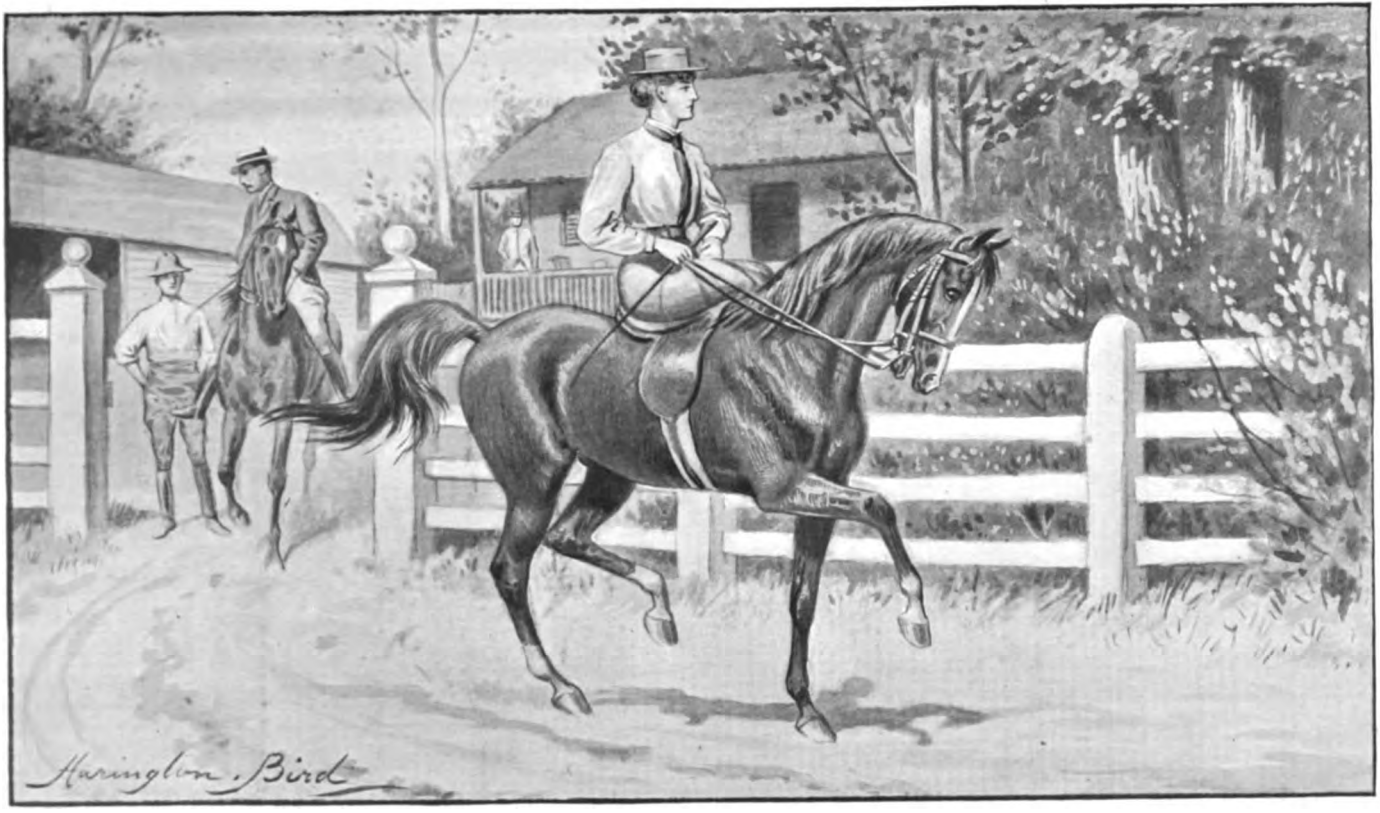
'What a have! A dead bird for you, Bradford!' called Dunstan as the minutes crept on. 'How many now, Ashley?'

'Barely two—TIME!' and Bradford dismounted triumphantly

'I'll swear to the horse,' said Porteous. 'I saw him chucking them sky-high at the autumn show. By Jove! you've bossed him, Ashley.'

'Don't think I have; nothing will ever boss him when he means business. Tell you what, though. If I felt inclined to skin my guests I'd double the stakes and lay the same odds that none of you fellows will sit him ten minutes. I won't be greedy, though. Why was he quiet with Bradford? Well, I'm pretty sure it was because he forgot to crupper him. It was real kind of you fellows to block me from telling him about it just now.'

And it was the crupper that was the real *casus belli*. Against it he would be 'Separator' as long as he had a leg to stand upon;



WHAT A PAIR THEY LOOKED!

without a crupper, a real insult to such shoulders, he was 'the pick of the basket.'

'A very wholesome lesson, gentlemen'—Bradford looked round at them as he led the way back to the house, his eyeglass glaring from under the shade of the big saddle—'A very wholesome lesson; teach you my riding is not a very safe thing to lay against.'

'I should think not, old man,' laughed Dunstan, playfully patting the top of the big saddle. 'Rub it in! You're the champion now, Bradford. Separator bossed the district, and you've bossed him.'

'When we come to think of all he's done for the firm,' said Ashley a few minutes afterwards on the verandah, as referee, counting the stakes over to Bradford, 'I don't think it would be right to let Separator leave us. We'll take Blayton at his word. What do you think?'

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It was very soon after the floods had subsided that Blayton, to his disgust, saw Tim Ashley ride up to the gate at Saulton's new house. And, worse, he was riding Separator, who was carrying him in the sweetest way.

'Ashley! by the Smoke! I am glad to see you,' called Saulton from the verandah. 'Thought you'd been smashed and killed ages ago. Might have sent us a line to say you were alive.' The verandah at once filled with the Saulton household eager to welcome him, the only undemonstrative one being, of course, Miss Molly.

'Don't feel much as if I'd been smashed and killed long ago.'

'But where's that wretch of Blayton's? Why, you're riding him now!'

'I should think so, he's a ripper; you needn't tell Blayton. I'm going to take him at his word and stick to him, however much he wants him back. Besides, I've got something that'll do him much better.'

In the matter of another appropriation, however, Ashley failed to provide 'something that will do him much better.' Ashley's trip south was delayed for some weeks, and then he took Miss Molly with him—on their honeymoon.

To put it mildly, it was just a little rough on Blayton to see Separator carrying Molly Saulton; and what a pair they looked!

Altogether, Separator seemed to him a cruelly appropriate name.

HUNTING IN THE ANTIPODES

BY R. ROOPE REEVE

To readers of the *Badminton Magazine* (at least, those in England) the idea of hunting in what is to them summer will seem a trifle incongruous. Yet in Australia—that land of topsy-turvydom --the hunting season is then in full swing. The long dry summer, beginning about October, lasts on till April, when autumn rains may be expected. By the end of May, or beginning of June, the weather is considered cool enough, and the ground soft enough, to permit the opening meet to be held. The season lasts to about the middle of September.

When I refer to the favourable condition of the ground and weather, however, I must not be understood to be speaking from the English standpoint, as I doubt if an English hunting man would venture to bring out a valuable horse half a dozen times during the season. The ground, at the best of times, is only soft in comparison with its sun-baked condition in the summer, and, when contrasted with the going in England, would probably be considered adamantine; on some of the hot days towards the end of the season I am sure I am safe in saying that the thermometer often stands above seventy in the shade. Two wet hunting days in succession is a piece of ill-luck which the Colonial hunting man thinks quite sufficient to justify him in grumbling about the 'infernal climate.'

Wherever Englishmen gather together, it may safely be conjectured that before long their 'fancy' will 'lightly turn to thoughts' of sport of some kind or another. This being so, and given a small garrison of soldiers, with a number of energetic young officers planted in a small station, without anything in

the way of social distraction, and in a country where, even in those days, horseflesh and horsefeed were fairly cheap, it was only in accordance with the natural course of events that, in the very early days of Tasmania—then known as Van Diemen's Land, and not very much more than a convict settlement—a pack of hounds should have been started. Since then hunting has flourished intermittently, in good times there having been some four or five packs going, and in bad times perhaps only one; however, since its inauguration I do not think that hunting has ever absolutely died out in the island.

A GOOD MUSTER

Foxes have never been introduced into Tasmania, though I believe that some years ago a gentleman of sporting proclivities got a pair as far as the harbour at Hobart. He was then informed that there was a heavy fine for every fox imported, so his sporting ambitions—and at the same time the careers of the foxes—came to an untimely end. Their place is taken by stags and kangaroo in the middle of Tasmania, and in Hobart by the 'harmless necessary' drag.

There is an absence of anything in the way of pomp and ceremony pertaining to hunting in Tasmania, the hunting field being really a spot where all ranks meet on an equality. As far

as appearance goes, too, I must admit there is much to be desired. The followers very often turn out anyhow, the hounds are a decidedly 'scratch' lot, and the horses generally present an appearance which would cause them to be regarded with derision in the Shires. Yet, as a rule, every horse can jump his fifty fences or so in a run, and most of them timber fences, which would be considered very stiff in this country; the field, too, consists of workmen who go out to ride straight.

The jumps are almost all timber, either post and rails, or deadwoods, which are made of huge logs piled up to the height of about four feet, and as solid as walls. It may be taken as a general rule that the fences have to be jumped clean, or not at all; there is no 'give' in them.

The stags in the middle of the island afford capital runs. The longest I ever had was calculated at eighteen miles, and I am sure that was rather under than over estimating it. Upon that day the hounds met at noon, which is the usual hour for meeting there, at the residence of the master, and some time was lost—or perhaps spent would be a better word—in getting through an enormous hunt breakfast, done with characteristic Australian hospitality. Consequently it was one o'clock before the order was given for a start. Within about an hour we found a fine stag, and ran him with very few checks till, the shades of evening drawing on, the master was compelled to have the hounds whipped off. In spite of the slowness of the pace—for it took over three hours without any lengthy check to do our eighteen miles—this was a very severe run, on account of the rough ground we passed over. Five or six miles were across country which anyone unused to those parts would say it would be impossible to *ride* over, not to speak of *hunting*. This part is very rough indeed, up and down great rocky hills and ravines, where there is often only one possible path for ascent or descent, and where the field has to go in Indian file at a foot-pace. Every now and then you bundle off to get your horse down a ledge of, perhaps, four or five feet, or to ease him while you scramble up an almost perpendicular hill. To hunt in that part of the country the horses have to be as surefooted as cats; on the day I am speaking of I positively saw one very clever old horse, which had followed those hounds for years, leaping from one huge rock to another like a goat.

Another little peculiarity of this part of the country, when you get out of the rocky ground, is the number of treacherous bogs one comes across. Sometimes, when you think you have found

WELL OVER

a bit of nice soft going, without the slightest warning your horse will suddenly plunge into one of these bogs, almost up to the girths. I have seen a man compelled to scramble up on to the saddle, and kneel there like a monkey, clutching on to saddle or mane, or whatever came handy, till his horse floundered out.

Even with a good fencer one has to take some falls, as the country is, in many parts, riddled with rabbit burrows. The horses grow so accustomed to them, and so clever, that they will seldom get into a burrow that is not absolutely hidden, *if left alone*; this is a golden rule, as the chances are that if you begin to pull your horse about, between you you will make a mess of it; and my experience is, that the horses are quicker in seeing the burrows, and more clever in avoiding them, if left alone, than if any attempt is made to steer them. At first it requires a certain amount of confidence to leave it all to the horse, but experience soon teaches that this is the safest course. All over the country patches of ferns are continually being met with, and when going through these it is impossible for horses or any one else to see the burrows, on which occasions the only thing to do is to sit tight and take your spills when they come.

Kangaroos do not give nearly such good runs as the stags, as they will not go straight away, but run in a circle. I have jumped the same panel of a fence, from the same side, as many as three times, having been going over exactly the same ground in rings. Like the stags, they have a distinct partiality for rough going, and will not break into open country if they can help it; they can do tremendous feats in the way of 'lepping,' and it takes a very big jump to turn a kangaroo.

As far as the pack I was more identified with in Tasmania is concerned—viz., the Hobart Hunt Club pack, of which I was up to the end of last season honorary secretary—there is less to say, as our quarry always consisted of the wily red herring. Most of the hunting men there are engaged in business pursuits, and cannot afford the time to get far enough afield for live game. Under these circumstances drag-hunting forms a capital substitute. It has been said that the average gallop after drag-hounds, had it taken place after a fox, would have been considered one of the smartest runs of the season. This, I think, is fairly true, and, though a great many of the pleasures of *hunting* are lost, as good a *ride* can be had after drag-hounds as in any other kind of hunting.

Let us take, as a sample of a spin with the Hobart hounds, the last run I had with them, the final meet of last season, held on September 18.

As there is a twenty-mile drive to the meet for this particular run, the first thing you do on rising is to wend your way in fear and trembling to the window, and draw the blind. And what a sight meets your dazzled and delighted gaze! A sun so bright that it might be midday, with just the traces still to be seen of what has been a light frost, so light as to be almost only a dew (for it is now very late in the season). You admit to yourself that it is over-hot for scent, but will not allow your spirits to be dashed, consoling yourself with the thought that 'that's the best of a drag'—the scent can always be laid thicker.

You dress and breakfast to the tune of 'A Fine Hunting Day,' interspersed occasionally with a bar or two of 'John Peel.' Meaning to get the best you can out of your horse, you have had him sent on (led, not trained) early in the morning. Horses are not treated with the same consideration there as in England, and even the luxury of being led twenty miles on the road before the run is not allowed to all of them, many of the men riding their horses up at a fair pace, hunting them, and riding them straight back—a very fair day's work—over fifty miles, ten of them being pretty hard galloping, with very numerous fences.

At half-past ten you make a start, arriving at your destination about one. The landowners, though they have no particular reason to be so, are very hospitable to the Hunt Club, and here you are, *nolens volens* (though it is probably *volens*), dragged in to a huge repast. Soon, however, the word is passed to make a start, and all is bustle and confusion, tightening of girths and lengthening of stirrups, till the hounds are brought out, and laid on almost in the farmyard. A small fence at starting, and a gallop of a hundred and fifty yards to the next fence, allow everyone to get well away, and to take his own line. Fortunately, to-day is not a follow-my-leader day, as the country is very open, almost all the fences being post and rails, which can be 'had' anywhere for a couple of hundred yards.

Now you come, after half a dozen or so of pretty stiff 'uns, to a fence with a nasty drop into a road; one after another they stumble and peck, but no, not a single fall. Going off the road again, however, into some ferns, there is a ditch which is very difficult to see, and you and your nag 'measure your length.' Looking round, you see three or four others in the same plight. You are soon off again at steeplechase speed to make up lost ground, getting fence after fence, all four-railers. Just as you come up with the front division they leave the open country and go over an enormous deadwood into a patch of young wattles.

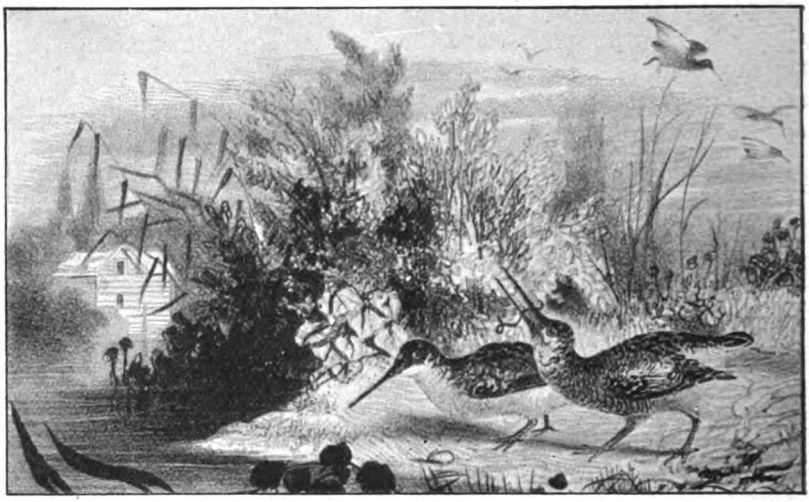
Swish, swish, go the wattles as they spring back off the man in front of you, and whip you across the face, causing you to use language not to be found in the 'Authorised Version.' After about a mile of this you are glad to get through them, and not sorry to see that, just outside, the drag has been lifted for a check. You get off and loosen the girths, to give your foaming steed a 'breather;' but the ten minutes allowed for this purpose passes all too soon for the blown horses, and it is time to start again. Now there is a mile or so with only one or two very stiff fences and a great many small brushwoods; and it is just as well, for

A SMALL MEET

there is some very stiff jumping ahead. You go over three narrow lanes, with four-railers on each side of them. There is a lot of heavy clouting here, and several horses 'wrong side up;' once you get somewhere up near the ears from a bad hit and a 'peck,' but scramble back just in time for the next fence. There is now a 'rasper' in front—the boundary fence of the racecourse—but you get over it successfully. The dragman takes you half round the steeplechase course and out at the other side. On the course some of the fellows begin to race a bit, and consequently there are some spills, as the horses are getting 'done;' but you know

better than this, and, though determined to do the lot, take them slowly. After jumping out of the course again, you come up with the dragman, and, as there is an inn handy, take him in to 'have something.' He tells you you have had a run of over nine miles, over sixty-two fences, of which fifty were stiff post and rails.

After shaking hands with all the country people you can find, you start on the homeward journey, much pleased with your gallop and at peace with the world. So ends your day out with drag-hounds in Tasmania, and, for honest jumping of big fences, you will probably have very many worse days before you will get a better one.



A DAY'S SNIPE SHOOTING

We all of us like to think sometimes over the good days that are gone, and perhaps amongst the pleasantest that have fallen to my share may be reckoned those spent in the south-west of the country which used to be called 'the most distressful,' but which can no longer lay claim to the title, seeing that most of the advantages that the 'finest peasantry in the world' have clamoured for they have got.

One of those good days that is often lived over again in the now quiet smoking-room in the evening dawned several years ago, bright and sunny; too sunny, in fact, for the work we had in hand, which was to shoot snipe. The everlasting sea was rolling in great Atlantic billows on to the smooth golden sand. The eternal mountains rose out of it half a dozen miles away across the bay. Where mountains and sea joined a thin haze of mist lay, so that you could not tell where the purple joined the green. What we used to call 'looking-glasses'—flat, smooth stones on the hill-side, wet in showery weather, invisible in settled fine—were flashing their messages across the water; Nature's heliographs from the mountain to the plain. A robin was singing close by. The pigeons were cooing in the yard, and, even now, I can hear the complaint of the windlass as it let the stable bucket down to get

I HAVE FOUND THEM LIE BEST ON RATHER HEAVY, WARMISH DAYS WITH A NICE STEADY BREEZE

water from the well. The grass and dead bracken were heavy with dew, and the deer as they shook themselves seemed standing in a tiny fog. I could see all this from the hall door, and a great deal more which Nature tells to her lovers at all times, but which we cannot tell each other. Fringing the sands there was a ridge of sandhills extending for miles, covered with bent—long, coarse, rushy grass, at this time of year almost the colour of sand—the home of countless rabbits. Very hard shooting they were too, dashing up and down the banks. I used generally to have a turn at them before the twelfth. Just inside the sandhills was a small lake covered with widgeon, duck, teal, coot, &c. They used to give capital flighting shots as they went to sea in the early morning and returned at night (provided the wind was against them). Inside again was the bog. Most people used to laugh at me for thinking it was an addition to the view. But then they did not know it as I did. The great golden gilcocks (high reeds), the green-brown rushes, the small black blots of water, the light-yellow patches marking veins of wet, and the small circles of vivid emerald green, all had their association, and all denoted the places that duck or teal, double snipe or jack, loved best. At that hour it was all smiling in the sun, and had the shadows of small clouds drifting across it. As I came to the end of my cigarette I found myself wondering if everyone had finished breakfast, and what the probable bag would be. So I went into the gun-room to talk to my old keeper, who was filling the cartridge bags and putting the flasks and sandwiches into the game bags. Old, indeed! he was only my own age then, and

The hardest day was never then too hard

for either of us. As keeper or friend you could never find his better, and now he sleeps in his long home in the land where all things are forgotten. That morning twenty miles with two bags on his back was nothing to him. My little cocker and the old red retriever bitch were whining impatiently, telling me we were late and that the days were so short that no man could see to shoot straight after four o'clock.

'Mac,' I said to the keeper (his name was Macevoy, but we always called him 'Mac'), 'you must come with me to-day. Paddy and Thady can show the other gentlemen the ground on the mountain, and we will go into the bog. I somehow think we shall have a good day.'

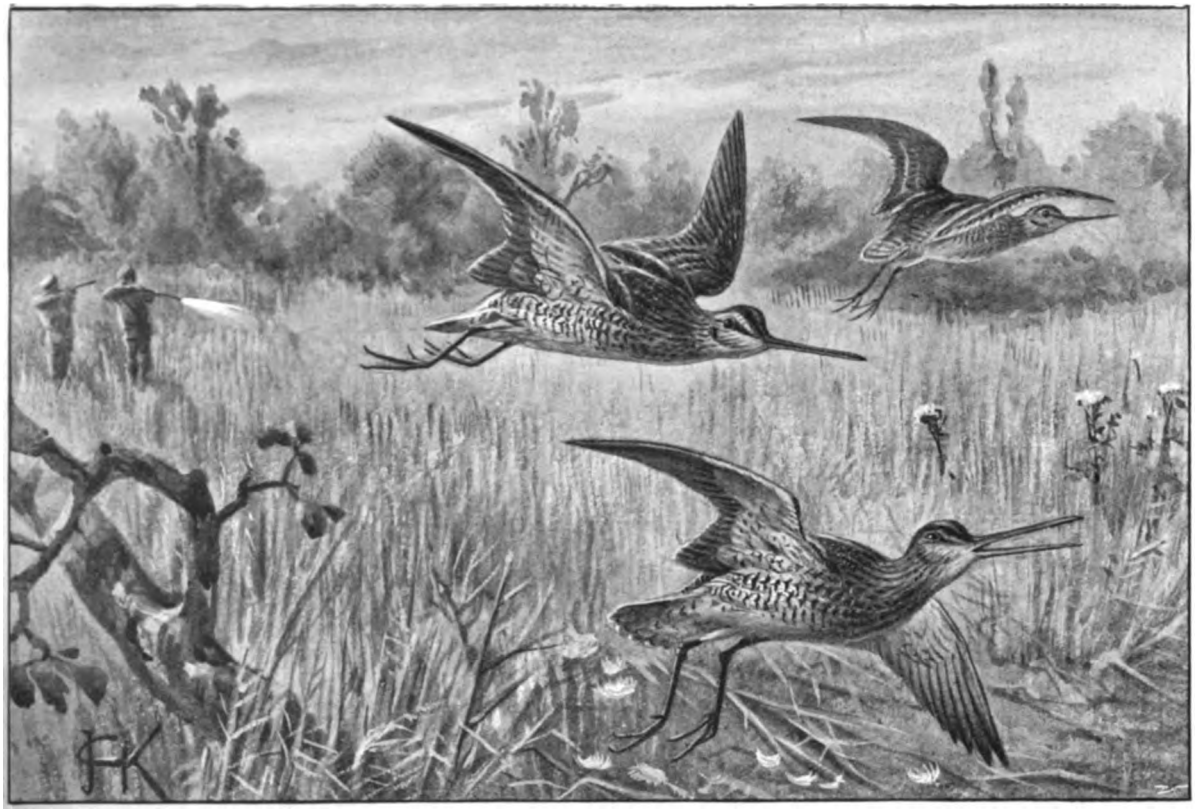
'You ought, sir,' he said, with his deep-set blue eyes laughing, as much as to say, 'you will if you can hit them.' A good face

he had set in his dark-brown beard, through which you could see his determined jaw. A quiet, confident face withal, unless he was, as he would say, 'vexed.'

'Well,' I said, 'meet us at the hall door in a quarter of an hour, with everything ready.' Then I went into the dining-room to see if breakfast was over. There they were as jolly as sand-boys, laughing and chaffing as they rose from the table, though I thought one or two seemed slow to leave the ladies, and small blame to them, for very sweet they looked in their clean white collars and nice country clothes. How pretty Irish girls can be, what a way they have with them, and what a talent for looking even nicer in the morning than they did after dinner, though last night we hardly thought that possible!

My companion for the day was the General, a lovely shot and fine sportsman. There were four guns in all. Snipe cannot be shot in comfort or in the best way with more than two guns, so we always used to divide. I am not sure that shooting alone has not its own very strong points. One of the pleasantest two hours I ever had was in a hard frost. All the birds were by the running water, and I was obliged to be in for lunch. I shot the streams alone, with a cocker and a boy to carry, and got ten brace of snipe, a brace of teal, and a woodcock. To-day the other two guns were going to shoot the mountain. They had the day before taken nineteen and a half couple of snipe out of the bog besides duck and teal; but the General said he would like to have a go at it himself. His only stipulation was that he must be in by half-past three, as he had letters to send by the mail.

It turned out a fine shooting day in point of weather. Clouds had come up, just enough to hide the sun without causing that heavy overcast under which it is impossible to see snipe well as they dart over the brown reeds and rushes. The wind was southerly, and the place too wet for a setter to work without springing birds. This being the case we could walk the best places with our backs to the sun (in case he should come out again) and go down wind. Down wind is, in my humble opinion, the only way to shoot snipe satisfactorily, as they then cross to the right or left. Some men who have shot snipe for years have told me that they preferred windy days, because, in high winds the birds were more easily approached. I cannot say that my experience leads me to a similar conclusion. In really rough weather I have not as a rule found them lie well, and, the wind being strong, they have been carried away at once by it, affording very difficult shots. A snipe, of course, rises against the wind as a rule,



UP GOT THREE SNIPE, TWO TO THE GENERAL AND ONE TO ME

because he thinks he can get away quicker. This advantage he seems to believe is counteracted when it is blowing hard. I have found them lie best on rather heavy, warmish days with a nice steady breeze—just the days, in fact, when one would expect they could sit with comfort to themselves; continued frost always excepted. I am afraid, alas! that one of the few certainties about snipe is that they are getting scarcer year by year. Breech-loaders, poaching, trying to bring the bird's proper domains under cultivation, and hard winters—all these things are against him.

We spent half an hour in what we called 'the west of the road,' but did not do much good—a couple and a half of snipe and one of teal, with more teal marked down. One rather curious shot I made was at a snipe about thirty yards off, flying rather low over the rushes. I shot the bird, and in a direct line, about twenty yards further on, I came across a teal wounded in the head; the only explanation was that, both birds being in line, some of the outside shots struck and crippled the teal. Then we left the road for the bog proper. We had hardly stepped over the plank crossing the big drain before up got three snipe, two to the General and one to me. For mine, I trust, I was duly thankful. He was not an easy shot, and I like beginning well. The General accounted for his most satisfactorily. Then, as the shots had not risen the teal, we thought we might as well try for them. To-day the luck was with us. I left the General sitting on his hunkers in one patch of rushes up to his ankles in ooze, and hid myself in another as well as I might, Mac going round in the meantime to put up the birds. The idea was that they should fly over our heads to the lake or the sea beyond us, as we generally found this more paying than walking them up ourselves. The cocker was shivering with excitement at my feet, his great earnest eyes looking from my face to the sky and back again. It took Mac a long time to get round, but he was putting up no snipe, which was a comfort. A sharp-pointed rush was pricking my leg and others were tickling my face. It took a long time, and perhaps one's thoughts are stealing back again to the breakfast-table when—whish! and they are up and off.

How quickly a teal rises! Apparently it is shot up by some unseen spring from the water. Here they come, their little straight necks craning as if racing for the sea. Bang, bang, d——, two down with the right, and a shocking miss with the left. There goes the General's gun, a beautiful right and left, both stone dead, and one of mine is a runner. There he goes again as a laggard tries to join the rest. The young dog is almost crying to

do his share. Almost, but not quite, for he does not make a sound. With his aid we quickly gathered my dead bird and the General's three, but the runner cost us a long hunt. She had, of course, made for the nearest water, which in this case was a sort of natural small drain in the bog not two feet wide. The question was, as it often is, 'Which way?' She must be swimming under water, now and then raising her head to take in air. Eventually we saw her doing this and bagged her. Do we, any of us, *always* take sufficient pains and time to bring to hand our wounded fur and feather? I am afraid not. And are we getting more careful? How many youngsters that have shot a few seasons have learnt properly how to mark a bird down? They can shoot, I know they can, but it takes more than that to make a sportsman. Oh, my brothers and, nowadays, my sisters too, what does not game give us? Does it not give us health, and exercise, and careful living (knocking off that last 'split' in the smoking-room because it is a shooting day to-morrow), and forgetfulness of our worries, and troubles, and bills? Do we not all know the intense satisfaction of shooting well? Is a snipe a good bird at dinner? Surely we should remember the rabbit that will, if possible, reach his earth in time, if only to crawl out again to die in the open; the cripppled hare that may get her living eyes picked out by the grey crow; the snipe that the frost stiffens.

On we went with varied—generally good—success. Birds were plentiful, and lay fairly well; in fact, we were making a bag. One bird I shall never forget. The snipe carried on, hard hit, and fell dead about a hundred yards off. When we reached the place we found it had fallen close to a stream, but on which side of it the dog had to find out. Left quite alone he tried the near side with no success, and then the far side vainly also. Then he came back and ran down the sluggish stream some way, picked it out of the water, and brought it back. That may sound, to some, rather far-fetched in more ways than one, but it is true all the same.

At lunch we had fourteen and a half couple of snipe, three and a half brace of teal, one duck, and a pheasant that had strayed out to feed on the black seeds of the rushes, of which these birds are very fond. We did not stay long over our sandwiches, as there was a cold draught blowing over the land and we were wet up to our knees. The General was a great man to walk a bog, travelling fast and shooting well at the same time. 'Hither and over,' the country people used to call him, from his power of getting about. I had fallen off in my shooting after

the first two hours, and the success of the day rested with my companion. After a short time I worked him up to a soft, spongy, shaky piece of ground, all over green moss, through which the water bubbled up with a sucking sound around our ankles. It was generally a noted place for jack, and to-day was no exception. We had three couple down without walking as many yards. We were drawing near home, so I looked at my watch.

'Nearly three o'clock, General,' said I, 'and what about the post?'

'What snipe have we got?' said he.

We emptied the bag, and counted out twenty-one and a half couple.

'Oh, don't mind the post,' said he; 'we'll shoot as long as we can see.'

So we tried some dark rushy fields skirting the bog, which were likely places for birds to pitch in after being disturbed in the morning; and there they were. Not very many, but all lying like stones. The walking was good, and we were both shooting well. I can see their white bellies now as they fell with a rebound on the firm, open patches. Mac's face expressed intense satisfaction, and the quick, keen glance he occasionally gave me when he caught my eye, said what I cannot explain, but what you may understand.

Some way across the fields we got a brace and a half of golden plover flying off to the mountain, and soon after that the light failed. We sat down on a fence near some running water to count the bag and empty our flasks. When we made it out to be twenty-nine couple of snipe, four and a half brace of teal, one duck, one pheasant, and a brace and a half of golden plover, we lit our cigarettes and trudged happily home, squelching the water out of our boots as we went.

We had nearly a mile to go, and it was dark when we entered the little village. The clouds had drifted away, leaving a clear sky, in which the stars were beginning to show. The air was fresh and keen, making the turf smoke from the cabin fires smell strong and pungent. The glare from the lamps in the low houses shot across what was called 'the street' (save the mark!) in rifts of light, illumining the muddy, stony road and occasional geese and goats. On we plodded, through the lodge gates and up the avenue towards the old house that showed its turrets against the sky, stern and strong. Behind us, close by, the sea was quietly thinking aloud its thoughts of the good and bad things it had

seen and the mighty things it had done. Almost at our feet it had flung some of the stragglers of the Armada, and only last year it did the same by a large vessel, after taking all hands into its own keeping, giving a safe voyage to the skipper's dog, who arrived on shore safe and sound.

> 'Fair mother, fed with the lives of men,
> Thou art subtle, and cruel of heart, men say,
> Thou hast taken, and shall not render again;
> Thou art full of thy dead, and as cold as they.
> But death is the worst that comes of thee;
> Thou art fed with our dead, O mother, O sea,
> But when hast thou fed on our hearts? or when
> Having given us love, hast thou taken away?'

Thoughts something like these were passing in a hazy way through my mind as the General and I chatted over the good shots and the bad ones, and guessed what the bag might have been but for the latter. For all I know his thoughts might have been just as far away. We all live alone.

We went in the back way, up the old stone passage, past the kitchen (and what a row they make in a big Irish kitchen!), so on to the smoking-room, out of which the gun-room opened.

'Well, did you have a good day?' 'What did you get?' 'Were they wild?' 'Where did you find most?' 'How did you shoot?' and so on. Then, as each helped himself to whisky and soda, ginger cordial, or orange brandy, according to his taste, we all began to talk at once, and there might have been a dozen men chattering instead of four. When the air became thick with cigarette smoke and the steam was coming off the damp clothes we thought it time to go to hot baths and clean linen. The two bags looked well laid out on the gun-room table—at least, all but those birds that had fallen in water—their feathers smoothed down and the birds on their backs.

I thought I would just look into the drawing-room on my way up, so I opened the door and looked over the screen. It was a large, pretty room, full of flowers and easy chairs, and on the walls favourite pictures. The fire was burning low. I am very fond of a fire. He is a great friend of mine and winked at me as I looked at him; the ladies all looked very warm, and snug, and cosy. Then there were the same questions to answer that had been asked in the smoking-room, and another short chat about the day.

'It was a jolly day to be out in too,' I said; 'the country was

looking grand. I hope you haven't been sticking in front of the fire all the afternoon.'

'Oh no, of course we haven't,' someone said lazily, as she stretched her arms over her head and then felt the back of it to see if it was all as it should be.

At that moment the fire fell in with a crash of horror to think that such lips should say such things. To his certain knowledge they had been with him since three, and had lunched late.

'Come on,' they said, 'we are all dying for tea, and we'll have it in the hall. This old fire is going out.'

So the old friend who had made them comfortable for so long was left for a newer and a brighter one, like many another. Poor old fellow, his sides were old and cold, but his heart was as warm as ever!

'You'll be better after dinner,' I said to him as I went off to my room for a bath and a smoking-suit.

My dog pattered upstairs after me, and immediately brought my slippers, smiling all over his dear old face. He never could understand that boots must come off first. He was always in a terrible hurry with those slippers, both when it was bedtime and when it was time to get up. Then he lay down before the fire and licked himself contentedly. Oh! the joy of a real hot bath after peeling off the reeking, cold, wet things! It is joy to feel the hot water all over one, taking out the soreness and the stiffness from every joint, and then the nice clean smell of soap. I stayed in it a long time, going over the day yet again. Then I went down, feeling pleasantly tired and hungry, and at peace with all the world.

DESTINY AND THE DOG

BY W. G. WATERS

I DO not believe there lives a man more well disposed to dogs than I am, provided they be dogs of the right sort; neither do I believe that one living being ever felt for another hatred deeper or more full than I harboured, and indeed still harbour, towards a certain dog named Brisk. No dog could have a nicer name than Brisk; the word connotes the most fascinating and winsome attributes in dog nature, but this particular dog failed to live up to his name. Brisk was a dull, surly, lymphatic beast. In the original scheme of Nature he must have been destined for something else; what sinister brute I will not venture to specify, not being a naturalist, but I will maintain that the Zoo includes no living creature, however base, which would not suffer deterioration were it to exchange its personality for that of Brisk.

Brisk became a member of my household on the prayer of my sister Belinda, who keeps house for me. I did my best to bar his entrance into what had hitherto been a happy home; but it happened that Brisk was introduced by her Uncle Joshua, and it is a cardinal maxim of Belinda's philosophy that Uncle Joshua's little whims must be humoured. Why, I cannot understand, seeing that he lives on a pension, and, if at the end of the year he finds he is fifty pounds to the good, he promptly takes a ticket for Monte Carlo, where he infallibly disembarrasses himself of his superfluous riches. The memory of the fact that our sufferings on account of this accursed dog were incurred for no better reason than the conciliation of such an uncle, has anointed with corrosive poison the dart which unkind fate cast at us. Uncle Joshua is a vulgar old snob, the bore of a third-rate club, and whenever I meet him I am entertained with long histories of a certain Major Foskett, one of the Fallowshire Fosketts. This worthy is a member of Committee of the Civil and Military, and

Uncle Joshua grows eloquent over the help Dick Foskett can give me if ever I should come up for election—*Di tale avertite*—at this precious club of his.

One day at the beginning of the year he came uninvited to lunch, and told us that Foskett had been staying with Sir Gregory Grounder, and had brought back with him a nice terrier pup—one of the real Grounder strain. Foskett's landlady, however, did not like dogs, so he would have to get rid of it. Grounder terriers generally fetched a tenner at least, but Foskett, generous kind-hearted chap as he was—would let this pup go for a fiver, if he were sure it would have a good home.

I remarked that Uncle Joshua's words produced a symptom of acquiescence in Belinda's eye, wherefore I held my gaze steadily

BRISK

cast down and spoke not a word. 'I suppose you wouldn't care to have him,' he said, and I answered that his supposition was a correct one. There was a decided 'bite' in Uncle Joshua's rejoinder, but I was not to be drawn, and the subject dropped with the observation from him that some people did not know a good thing when they saw it.

It is time now for a word or two about myself. I am a person with literary ambitions; and, like many of the same kidney, I have known disappointment. More than once Uncle Joshua has sneered over my waste of ink and paper, and has dropped hints that I had not better let it be known I am a 'writin' feller,' or anything of that sort, if I want to become a member of the Civil and Military. I admit that for a time there was some ground for Uncle Joshua's sarcasms. Chronic failure to obtain recognition of my literary gifts seemed to point to the ineptitude of my device, but at this particular juncture my luck

had begun to mend. A contribution of mine had been accepted, printed, and paid for; but, better than this, I had made the acquaintance of a certain Webster Johnson, a man who was reputed to possess a key which would open more than one of the gates leading to that land of promise I desired so keenly to enter. It was about two days after Uncle Joshua's call that I was seated in my sanctum, putting the final touches to an essay which might, I hoped, carry my name into regions considerably more 'high toned' than any I had yet attained. My 'library' is on the ground flour of a semi-detached villa residence; the window at the side commands a view of the tradesmen's walk to the kitchen door, and is less pervious than those in the front to the strains of the seldom absent piano organ. Well, gazing out of the window with that dull stare which seems inseparable from the mental search for an appropriate adjective, I was suddenly aware of a presence in the path below which certainly was not to be identified with that of any of the minions who 'called for orders' on the pretence of supplying our daily wants. The man in question wore the garb of a commissionaire. He had nothing in his hand but a piece of string, and he glanced downwards as he walked along. What he gazed at I could not see by reason of the intervening wall, but I was destined to learn its nature all too soon.

Ten minutes elapsed, during which time I had found my adjective and recast a sentence, and then a knock came at the door, and the cook appeared with a radiant grin on her good-natured Irish face. 'If you please, sir,' she began, 'a man's brought a dog from Mr. Wilkins' (this was Uncle Joshua), 'and you're to have it for nothing, and welcome.'

'But I don't want the dog,' I cried, hot with anger. 'Tell the man to take him back.'

'Sure the man's gone in, and t'would be a pity not to kape the dog. He's eatin' the beef steak bones as natural as life.'

'I tell you I won't have the dog. Send him—send him—' and not being able to specify a destination, I paused, choked with anger.

'Ah! there's nothin' to distress yourself about, sir, and the mistress is in the kitchen, and would like to kape him, though to be sure he's growlin' at her like a tiger.'

I rose from my chair, my morning's work utterly ruined, and followed the cook down to the kitchen. There stood Belinda gazing under the table at a dusky mass which was giving out crunchings and growlings in about equal volume. 'Oh, Theodore,'

she said, 'the dog has come; isn't he a dear, and a real Grounder terrier!'

As the beast was now domiciled with me, I determined to examine him, and, having armed myself with a long-handled brush, I compelled him forth into the light, eliciting the while a storm of growls truculent enough to blanch the cook's cheeks and to induce Belinda to choose a station favourable for retreat. Then I saw what the dog was like.

The Grounder terrier, whatever its defects may be, had at least the merit of originality. Brisk was of a breed the like of which I had never seen before, possibly because he took a little from every known species. I could have pardoned his ugliness, but there was in his eye a sullen, spiteful glare which made me feel the presence of a malevolent foe. Brisk, however, refused to ascend from the basement, and to notice any one in the establishment except the cook, so I was not actively annoyed by his advent. A licence had to be taken out, and a muzzle bought, and thus I was introduced to the sweets of dog-ownership. Uncle Joshua, the next time he met me, greeted me cheerily: 'Ah, I'm glad you've got the dog. It wouldn't have done for Sir Gregory to have known that one of his strain was going begging, and Foskett wouldn't have liked it. I don't want to rub Dick Foskett the wrong way just now, as, from a word he let drop the other day, I think he may get me a day's shooting down at Sir Greg's place next autumn.'

About a week after this I was able to bring off a *coup* which I had long been wanting to make. I succeeded in getting Webster Johnson to come and dine, and secured Mrs. Mickleham, whom everybody likes, and Mr. and Mrs. Lancelot Rooke to meet him. Johnson is a great diner-out, and poses as a gourmet; but, as Belinda and I concocted the menu, we neither of us felt at all ashamed of the repast we proposed to set before him. The other guests had arrived and were in the drawing-room, when I went up after a visit to the dining-room to assure myself that the champagne would be cool and the claret duly warm. Just as I was about to enter Johnson rang, and Susan, who was awaiting him, let him in. I heard the door shut, then I heard a surly bark, then a yell of agony, and lastly a string of oaths long and loud in Johnson's voice.

'Call off the something somethinged brute! He's bitten me right through the leg! Where does the nearest doctor live?'

I stood transfixed with horror as I listened to Susan's mild expressions of regret and her directions as to where Dr. James,

my excellent friend, might be found. I heard the door close, and the sound of Johnson's halting exit down the steps and the iracund clang of the violently slammed iron gate. I did not,

A YELL OF AGONY

however, realise the full bitterness of misfortune till I heard a sort of sniffing and snorting, intermixed with low satisfied growls, and marked a dusky shadow lumbering down the kitchen stairs. Alas! for my dreams of literary help from Webster Johnson! Alas for our dinner concocted with so much care and

now destined to be utterly *manqué*! The red mullet, the *ris de veau à la renaissance*, the *cuilles sous les cendres*, the Welsh mutton, the *omelette aux confitures* might have been so much sawdust as far as my palate was concerned. I managed to explain to Belinda the cause of Johnson's non-appearance, and, overwhelmed as I was with my own sorrow, I could not help pitying her, as she did her best to carry a smiling face for the benefit of our guests. Something in her eye showed me she was fully conscious that the responsibility of the catastrophe lay upon her shoulders, through her benevolent neutrality at the juncture when the question of Brisk's adoption was first noticed. I made a lame apology to the others to account for Johnson's vacant chair. The whole affair was a dismal failure, and I was not sorry that our friends realised the fact and early took their leave. As soon as they had gone, I put on an overcoat and went to inquire of Dr. James as to the exact amount of damage done to Webster Johnson's calf.

The doctor said the bite was one which showed the dog was in earnest. Brisk had evidently found occupation congenial to his taste, for the next day he tore the footman's trousers, and from this time I noticed that all the tradesmen's people, when they called in the morning, would telegraph to the cook by waving of arms or baskets, and refuse to advance a step till a signal should be given from the kitchen window that Brisk was not on the war path. I recalled stories I had heard as to how dogs, even the mildest mannered of them, would become dangerously ferocious from the want of sufficient exercise. What then would be the effect of a month's inaction on a dog of a temper like that of Brisk? I made a farther expenditure on what the shopkeeper called a 'dog lead,' and, having instructed the cook to attach the same to his collar, I grasped the other end thereof, not without some qualms, and took Brisk for a promenade one evening after dinner. He trotted along with astonishing urbanity. He took no heed of other dogs who came to make inquiries, and I verily believe he viewed the walk as a corrective to his recent excesses, and was determined to put his liver right, so as to have a clean palate for the next bite which should come in his way.

I wandered on, heeding little where I went, and when I looked up at the name of the street where I was I found it was unknown to me. I was lost in London, and by implication Brisk was lost too. Sudden illumination came upon me that peradventure I, with the superior cunning of the human, might

return to known paths and leave Brisk wandering to that bourne from which no dogs, or very few, return. I stood in a street of little houses with discreet garden doors. One of these was ajar, and Brisk strained at the leash to enter. I stooped down, unbuckled his collar, and let him go to his fate. Then I softly closed the door and ran away as if the devil were behind me. I did not run long, as I am not in training, but I walked on and on till I found myself in a main road with hansoms and tramways. I took a cab back to my home, and when I arrived there I found Brisk on the door-mat.

He did not growl at me. I felt that he despised me and did not deem me worth a growl. He merely turned upon me that cold malicious eye, and as he followed me into the house I felt as one mastered by some sinister influence. Brisk haunted my dreams, and I lost both spirit and appetite. I wrote to Webster Johnson, making affectionate inquiries as to the condition of his injured leg, but my overture was met with chilling silence. The situation was growing intolerable, so I set myself to make another attempt to get rid of this incubus. I matured a scheme which, to be successful, would call for the co-operation of the officers of the law, and I set to work as follows: I took Brisk out with me, duly muzzled and collared, to the nearest police station, and, having summoned the inspector, I informed him that I had got a lost dog. The 'intelligent' officer at once took my name and address, and next, to my great discomfiture, proceeded to read the inscription on Brisk's collar.

'Ullo,' he cried, 'why this 'ere's your own dog!' and he stared at me with that unpleasant look which policemen acquire so easily.

I stood for some seconds silent. 'Well, sir,' I said, 'in fact he is my dog, but you see I want to lose him—couldn't you look after him as a lost dog?'

'Couldn't do it at no price, sir,' said the inspector; 'the dog is properly muzzled and all that. Of course, if he had been found outside unmuzzled it would be different.'

'Ah, yes, I see.' I realised the situation at once, and, having taken Brisk outside, I disembarrassed him of muzzle and leash. He trotted off to inspect an adjacent heap of garbage while I executed a rapid retreat. I turned at the corner of the street and perceived that the inspector had dexterously enmeshed Brisk with a looped cord, and was dragging him, reluctant as he was, within the portals of the station.

Brisk was now safely bound for the Dogs' Home. Once

within its grasp the lethal chamber would be his almost certain doom, for it seemed next to impossible that any purchaser for such a dog would be forthcoming. By good luck it happened

DRAGGING HIM, RELUCTANT AS HE WAS

that Belinda was away from home on a country visit, so no inconvenient questions came up for answer, and for two days my home knew all its ancient peace; but the calm was a deceptive one, for on the third morning my new-found joy was dashed by an announcement from Susan, as I sat repolishing my essay with

fresh zest, that there was a policeman in the hall who wanted to speak to me.

I bade her bring him in, my heart sinking horribly the while; and as soon as the door was closed he informed me that he had a summons for me to appear at the Kensington police-court on a charge of suffering a dog belonging to me to be at large without a muzzle.

'But I haven't got a dog!' I cried. 'At least I only had a dog for a day or two.'

'Dog in question found just outside police-station in West Street unmuzzled, and your name and address on collar,' said the constable all in a breath.

I now realised what a pretty trick that wag of an inspector had played me. I remembered to have heard how all fines for conviction of this class were given to the Police Orphanage, and I was forced to admire his philanthropic zeal—quite as honest as the zeal of the average charity cadger. The policeman before me was evidently in the plot, and I liked the look of him in spite of his wooden countenance and hostile errand; so I determined to take him into my confidence, and between us we fabricated another plot against the life and liberty of the unsuspecting Brisk. It was arranged that I should appear, pay fine and costs, and carry away with me the collar, the evidence of which had wrought my discomfiture. This done, my friend and fellow-conspirator declared that Brisk would certainly come under the category of 'strays,' and be liable to deportation.

All went well. I left the police-court without a stain on my character, and with Brisk's collar in my pocket; and a couple of days after I received a private communication that Battersea had claimed Brisk for its own. Of course Belinda had to be reckoned for but I was pretty sure she would acquiesce when she might hear that the dog was lost. When she came back I reeled off a glib story with the smallest possible amount of exultation and mendacity. I had no conception before this how easy it was to smile and be a villain.

Belinda was manifestly upset by my story, but she let no sign escape her beyond a few regretful words. Brisk's name was no more heard in our discourse than was his sullen growling in the lower regions of the house, yet the storms of the last few days had not left us unscathed. I could not get rid of a suspicion that the 'Terrace' had begun to look somewhat askance at us since that visit of the policeman, and my appearance in the police-court. In our terrace we were neighbourly after a fashion

somewhat rare in London. We were on visiting terms with a dozen or more of families, and our wedding acquaintance extended to almost every house; but ever since that fateful day a frost seemed to have fallen. I remarked amongst our neighbours a tendency to short-sightedness, and to cross the road at my approach. What wonder! Had I not stood in the place where Tim Doolan is wont to stand for wife-beating, and Harry Bolter for lifting a purse. I was sure the affair had been fully discussed by our own servants, and those right and left and over the way; and when once a legend like this gets firmly established, it takes a generation or two to live it down. Belinda, too, had become distraught and a trifle mysterious in her demeanour, wherefore I concluded the same trouble was vexing her.

About a fortnight after Belinda's return, Susan again entered my room one morning, and in a hesitating and trembling voice spake thus: 'If you please, sir, there is a policeman in the hall who wants to speak to you about a dog.'

I wheeled round suddenly, letting escape words which certainly ought not to have been spoken in Susan's hearing, and rushed out into the hall to meet my new trouble.

'Beg pardon, sir'—it was another policeman this time—'tisn't exactly you who are concerned, but I thought I'd better see you instead of the lady. Here is the summons, sir.'

I took hold of the odious paper and found it to be a summons issued by the Revenue authorities against Belinda Wilkins, for keeping a dog without a licence.

I stood for a moment half dazed. Surely the world must be going mad. For what dog could my sister be liable? I myself had paid the licence for the wretched Brisk, and with the memory of his sojourn beneath our roof fresh upon her she could never have made a second essay in dog-keeping. 'You may leave the summons with me,' I said, and taking the document with me, I went to seek Belinda.

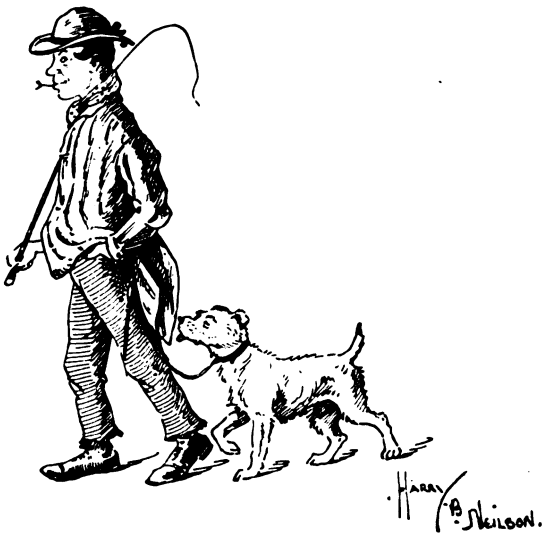
'We shall soon be described as "known to the police," Belinda,' I said somewhat bitterly as I laid the summons before her. 'We shall become more popular with our friends than ever. What in heaven's name is the meaning of this?'

Belinda read the paper to the end, she turned pale, and her attempt to meet my eye ended in total failure. 'What dog does this summons refer to?' I demanded.

She gave way to tears, and from behind her handkerchief came the uncertain words: 'Oh, Theodore, don't be angry with me! I dare say I did wrong, but it's--it's—Bub—Bub—Brisk.'

'Brisk!' I shouted. 'I thought he was stifled at Battersea a fortnight ago.'

To cut the story short, Belinda, still nursing that fatuous tradition as to the necessity of standing well with Uncle Joshua, no sooner heard that the brute was lost, than she started off to the Dogs' Home, where, by evil chance, she arrived on what would otherwise have been Brisk's last day of life. She bore him away, leaving her name and address, and through some occult channel the news that she had become the proprietor of a dog reached the



DEPARTED, SNIFFING AT HIS CONDUCTOR'S APRON

ears of the authorities at Somerset House. Brisk, since his reclamation had passed his existence in the knife-house, tempered by a carefully timed daily promenade under the cook's escort—a fact which accounted much in the way of tough puddings and lukewarm cutlets during the immediate past. To do Belinda justice, I will say that she wonderfully realised how ill-advised her recent step had been. I could not ply her with farther reproaches, so I withdrew, and we did not meet till dinner, when she informed me, in a tone of voice which proclaimed that her sorrow had lightened her, the cook had spoken to the butcher's man about Brisk, and how the butcher's man was sure he could find him a good home.

I rushed at this offer of deliverance, which seemed free from

all possibility of miscarriage, and I recked naught as to the character of the new home. If only it were far enough from my own, and a permanent one, *ruat cœlum*. The next day the butcher's man proved to be as good as his word, and Brisk departed, sniffing at his conductor's apron, which, no doubt, bore in itself suggestion of fleshly delights.

Though Brisk had departed, I found that household troubles did not altogether cease. Spring cleaning set in with unusual severity. The drawing-room was 'done up,' as we had determined to treat ourselves to a new carpet. The worry was acute for a time, but I was forced to admit that it brought full compensation in the result. I came back one afternoon from an expedition which had resulted in nothing better than the reclamation of certain manuscripts. I was out of spirits and disheartened. The drawing-room door stood open, and the glance of shaded sunlight and subdued harmonious colour within was very welcome. I entered, and as I crossed the threshold I was conscious of a slight sound of movement and of a most appalling smell. It was of something incomparably nauseous, a horrible satire on the beeswax and elbow-grease recently expended in cleaning. I advanced towards the table; a malignant growl, which could only have come from one throat, greeted my approach, and the next moment Brisk rushed from his lair on the new carpet, bearing in his mouth the head of a sheep and various pendant horrors, all in a state of advanced putrescence.

Here I pause. I have lived for the last few days in the growing belief that I am as fast bound in the coils of necessity as any protagonist of Greek tragedy, and that all effort on my part to free myself from the haunting terror of this new Snarleyow will be in vain. Sometimes, indeed, a faint hope will spring, and in these moments of public exaltation, I half determine to take courage and strike one more blow for freedom by some colourable evasion of the Sale of Poisons Act.

NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

I HAVE given the picture of Best Man on the opposite page because it seems to me an exceptionally successful likeness of one of the handsomest and most shapely horses ever seen. As for the horse, the artist who took the photograph, M. Romaine, editor of the *Sport Universel Illustré*, took another at the same time which I believe he prefers; but I like this better of the two, though the horse is not standing as well as he might be. One does not want a racehorse to stand as some carriage horses do, with their legs out in front to them; but Best Man here is standing rather the other way, with his legs too much underneath him, and this gives him just the slightest suspicion of uprightness in the shoulder, whereas his shoulders are perfectly placed. I have often seen the best judges of horses in his box, whilst he was still in training, vainly looking for a fault, and only able to suggest that he was 'a little on the small side,' an idea which was dispelled when they stood up to him and found that he was as nearly as possible 16 hands; but he was so perfectly shaped that he did not perhaps look his height. As for the horse himself, when in training he ran thirty-three races and won eighteen of them; twice he was so unluckily beaten that he surely ought to have won. He was not quite himself early in his three-year-old career; but when he got right, in fourteen consecutive races he was only once defeated.

Taken over to Longchamps for the Prix du Conseil Municipal —a 4,000*l.* stake run over a mile and a half of the Grand Prix course—he won in a canter, and a short time after Throstle, in

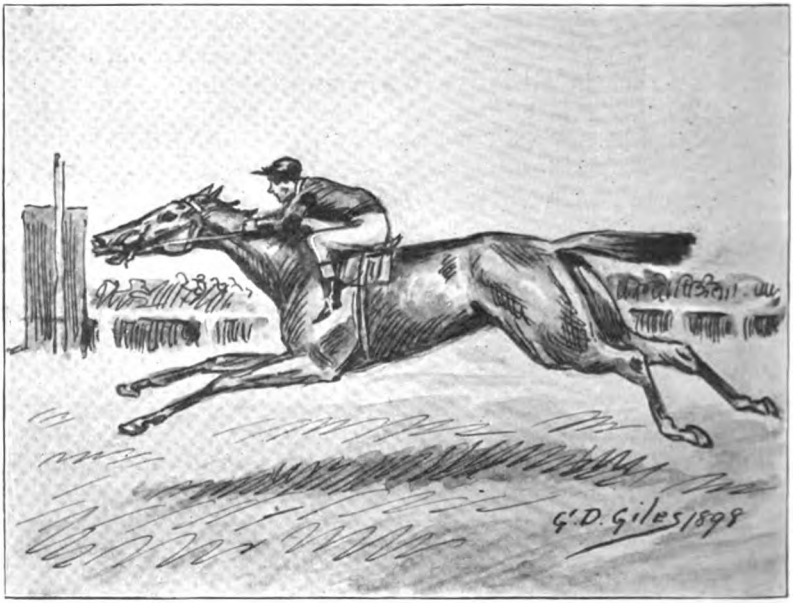
BEST MAN

the St. Leger, had beaten Ladas, winner of the Derby, Best Man beat her very easily indeed. I am not sure whether I have told the story of how, on that occasion, Sir Frederick Johnstone, owner of Throstle, said to Webb, who rode Best Man, 'Three hundred yards more and we should have beaten you!' to which Webb replied, 'Not if we'd gone all the way round three times more, Sir Frederick!' Two of Best Man's daughters were sold at the July sales for close on a thousand guineas. A son was also sold at Doncaster, fetching only twenty-five guineas in consequence of his small size. The first day the little thing was turned out with his dam in the paddocks at Howbury she nearly galloped him to death, and doubtless stunted his growth; but he is now doing well, and is a very nice colt. Many of Best Man's old admirers will, I am sure, be glad to see this picture of him.

Those who have not seen Tod Sloan, the American jockey, will obtain an excellent idea of his eccentric seat from the sketch Mr. G. D. Giles has made, here reproduced. Sloan's performances have created a remarkable sensation—so small a man has seldom or never made so big a stir—and led to a correspondence in the sporting papers, some contributions to which it is impossible to read without contemptuous indignation. One creature, who professes to have been an owner, trainer, and jockey for forty years, suggests that no one should oppose Sloan, that he should be allowed to walk over whenever he has a mount, so that, there being no sport whilst he is here, he would finally be driven away; and yet another, of almost the same kidney, would have him handicapped to carry extra weight when competing with English jockeys! It was a pity to publish such stupid and cowardly rubbish, even with the accompanying editorial expression of disagreement; and the second suggestion is as silly as the first is mean—for if our jockeys like to ride perched up on their horses' withers in the Sloan fashion, there can be no sort of objection, unless, of course, it comes from the owners of the animals so bestridden.

All kinds of arguments have been put forward about lessening the wind pressure by crouching down on the horse's neck, and giving scope to his hind quarters by sitting on his fore; and it is triumphantly pointed out by supporters of these ideas that men

who race on bicycles always lean forward over the handles. This would be very convincing if a bicycle were a horse with four legs, shoulders, back ribs, and the other features of a horse's anatomy. My own idea is that the successful results of Sloan's riding are very little, if at all, influenced by his style of sitting forward and lying on his horse's neck. He has ridden thus for so long a time that to alter his seat now would doubtless inconvenience him, and put him to a disadvantage; but his victories seem to me attributable to his exceptional knowledge of pace, his excellent hands, and his perception of the peculiarities of the horse he is



SLOAN

riding—Fordham and others have possessed this—so that to a great extent he lets the animal run its own race. He humours horses, and they almost always run kindly with him—a consequence of his hands. He has been fortunate in his mounts, no doubt, and the very great majority of his successes, at any rate, would have been gained with any competent jockey in the saddle. It is to be noticed, however, that often when he does not win he is only just beaten. If not 'there,' he is extremely close up, and this is proof of skill and judgment. He is, indeed, a jockey of the first rank—with a very ugly seat and style, to which, I think, his victories are quite wrongly attributed.

I much regret that exigencies of space prevent me from dwelling at adequate length on the last edition of Mr. Joseph Osborne's 'Handbook of the Horse.' The regret is in some degree modified, however, by the fact that the work really needs no recommendation. Those to whom it appeals, all breeders and owners of thoroughbred stock who take an intelligent interest in their horses, have long known the volume as simply indispensable, containing as it does a fund of knowledge to which men who are concerned with racehorses have to make frequent reference—so frequent, indeed, that the new edition is welcome, not only for the fresh matter it contains, but because, in very many cases, the one previously in use is likely to be well worn. Anyone who has still curiosity as to the so-called 'figure system' of breeding may be specially referred to this volume. Mr. Osborne's judgment, competence, and long experience are beyond question, and he demolishes the theory altogether. It is compounded, he declares, of 'assumption and presumption,' and he shows at length why it is preposterous. As I have always been an opponent of it, it is, of course, possible that I accept Mr. Osborne's arguments, contentions, and conclusions too readily. I can only recommend any reader who cares to investigate the subject to get the book and judge for himself.

It is the invariable practice in this Magazine to make each number complete in itself, so that the reader may peruse it from beginning to end, if it pleases him, without having to recollect situations and occurrences a month old. When one reads several magazines, as so many people do, one is apt, I find from personal experience, to forget how stories left off, or sometimes to mix up one's serials. This little Note is written because a 'II' appears at the head of the first story, and the title, 'Some Reminiscences of an Irish R.M.,' is continued; but I wish to remark that the system of 'each number complete in itself' is not abandoned. Major Sinclair Yeates, the R.M. in question, is more or less the central figure in each of the stories; that is all; there is no other continuity. Several more of the stories are to come, and I am very glad to say so; for if readers agree with my opinion, they will find these sketches singularly vivid and delightfully humorous pictures of Irish life and character. If I were an independent critic I should like to say more, but I must not write too much in praise of my own wares.

Owners of horses are now, or have lately been, hard at it puzzling their wits to find good names for their foals and yearlings. This season it struck me that happy names were scarcer than usual; but this will not be the reproach next year if others are as successful as Mr. H. B. McCalmont has been with a number of his. Here are some examples: Suspender—Isola, 'Sole Support;' Sheen—Reservation, 'Richmond Park.' I suppose it need hardly be explained that this is a reservation near Sheen? Suspender—Mecca, 'Kaaba.' That may not strike everybody at once, but the ingenuity of it will be perceived when it is recollected that it is there that Mahomet's coffin is supposed to be suspended between earth and heaven. Suspender—Rondo, 'High Note;' Isinglass—Be Cannie, 'Glasgow'—where the cannie people specially come from. Isinglass—My Lady, 'Glass of Fashion;' Isinglass—Glare, 'Glass Eye.' The little creature so called only has one, which makes the name more unhappily appropriate. These strike me as excellent.

There is just time to add a brief note about the Middle Park Plate, the most notable of races for two-year-olds. The idea that the American-bred Caiman could win would have appeared ridiculous a short time before the race, for most of his 'form' previously to the second October week had been very moderate, and some of it distinctly poor. The great majority of Middle Park Plate winners have been brilliant performers; and when one glances back at more than one of Caiman's modest achievements it is difficult to associate him with 'classic' events. To see the record of great victories by a son of Locahatchee and Happy Day would also look odd! However, Caiman won, beating Flying Fox, who seemed to dislike the hard ground, and had not perhaps recovered from the effects of a severe race at Kempton Park a week before. To all appearance the three-year-olds of next season will be no better than, if as good as, they have been this.

THE

BADMINTON MAGAZINE

December 1898

SOME EXPERIENCES OF AN IRISH R.M.

BY E. Œ. SOMERVILLE AND MARTIN ROSS

No. III.—IN THE CURRANHILTY COUNTRY

It is hardly credible that I should have been induced to depart from my usual walk of life by a creature so uninspiring as the grey horse that I bought from Flurry Knox for 25*l.*

Perhaps it was the monotony of being questioned by every other person with whom I had five minutes' conversation, as to when I was coming out with the hounds, and being further informed that in the days when Captain Browne, the late Coast-guard officer, had owned the grey, there was not a fence between this and Mallow big enough to please them. At all events, there came an epoch-making day when I mounted the Quaker and presented myself at a meet of Mr. Knox's hounds. It is my belief that six out of every dozen people who go out hunting are disagreeably conscious of a nervous system, and two out of the six are in what is brutally called 'a blue funk.' I was not in a blue funk, but I was conscious not only of a nervous system, but of the anatomical fact that I possessed large, round legs, handsome in their way, even admirable in their proper sphere, but singularly ill adapted for adhering to the slippery surfaces of a saddle. By a fatal intervention of Providence, the sport, on this my first day in the hunting-field, was such as I could have enjoyed from a bath-chair. The hunting-field was, on this

occasion, a relative term, implying long stretches of unfenced moorland and bog, anything, in fact, save a field; the hunt itself might also have been termed a relative one, being mainly composed of Mr. Knox's relations in all degrees of cousinhood. It was a day when frost and sunshine combined went to one's head like iced champagne; the distant sea looked like the Mediterranean, and for four sunny hours the Knox relatives and I followed nine couple of hounds at a tranquil footpace along the hills, our progress mildly enlivened by one or two scrambles in the shape of jumps. At three o'clock I jogged home, and felt within me the newborn desire to brag to Peter Cadogan of the Quaker's doings, as I dismounted rather stiffly in my own yard.

I little thought that the result would be that three weeks later I should find myself in a railway carriage at an early hour of a December morning, in company with Flurry Knox and four or five of his clan, journeying towards an unknown town, named Drumcurran, with an appropriate number of horses in boxes behind us and a van full of hounds in front. Mr. Knox's hounds were on their way, by invitation, to have a day in the country of their neighbours, the Curranhilty Harriers, and with amazing fatuity I had allowed myself to be cajoled into joining the party. A northerly shower was striking in long spikes on the glass of the window, the atmosphere of the carriage was blue with tobacco smoke, and my feet, in a pair of new butcher boots, had sunk into a species of Arctic sleep.

'Well, you got my letter about the dance at the hotel to-night?' said Flurry Knox, breaking off a whispered conversation with his amateur whip, Dr. Jerome Hickey, and sitting down beside me. 'And we're to go out with the Harriers to-day, and they've a sure fox for our hounds to-morrow. I tell you you'll have the best fun ever you had. It's a great country to ride. Fine honest banks, that you can come racing at anywhere you like.'

Dr. Hickey, a saturnine young man, with a long nose and a black torpedo beard, returned to his pocket the lancet with which he had been trimming his nails.

'They're like the Tipperary banks,' he said; 'you climb down nine feet and you fall the rest.'

It occurred to me that the Quaker and I would most probably fall all the way, but I said nothing.

'I hear Tomsy Flood has a good horse this season,' resumed Flurry.

'Then it's not the one you sold him,' said the Doctor.

'I'll take my oath it's not,' said Flurry with a grin. 'I believe he has it in for me still over that one.'

Dr. Jerome's moustache went up under his nose and showed his white teeth.

'Small blame to him! when you sold him a mare that was wrong of both her hind legs. Do you know what he did, Major Yeates? The mare was lame going into the fair, and he took the two hind-shoes off her and told poor Flood she kicked them off in the box, and that was why she was going tender, and he was so drunk he believed him.'

The conversation here deepened into trackless obscurities of horse-dealing. I took out my stylograph pen, and finished a letter to Philippa, with a feeling that it would probably be my last.

The next step in the day's enjoyment consisted in trotting in cavalcade through the streets of Drumcurran, with another northerly shower descending upon us, the mud splashing in my face, and my feet coming torturingly to life. Every man and boy in the town ran with us; the Harriers were somewhere in the tumult ahead, and the Quaker began to pull and hump his back ominously. I arrived at the meet considerably heated, and found myself one of some thirty or forty riders, who, with traps and bicycles and footpeople, were jammed in a narrow, muddy road. We were late, and a move was immediately made across a series of grass fields, all considerately furnished with gates. There was a glacial gleam of sunshine, and people began to turn down the collars of their coats. As they spread over the field I observed that Mr. Knox was no longer riding with old Captain Handcock, the Master of the Harriers, but had attached himself to a square-shouldered young lady with effective coils of dark hair and a grey habit. She was riding a fidgetty black mare with great decision and a not disagreeable swagger.

It was at about this moment that the hounds began to run, fast and silently, and every one began to canter.

'This is nothing at all,' said Dr. Hickey, thundering alongside of me on a huge young chestnut; 'there might have been a hare here last week, or a red herring this morning. I wouldn't care if we only got what'd warm us. For the matter of that, I'd as soon hunt a cat as a hare.'

I was already getting quite enough to warm me. The Quaker's respectable grey head had twice disappeared between his forelegs in a brace of most unsettling bucks, and all my experiences at the riding school at Sandhurst did not prepare me

for the sensation of jumping a briary wall with a heavy drop into a lane so narrow that each horse had to turn at right angles as he landed. I did not so turn, but saved myself from entire disgrace by a timely clutch at the mane. We scrambled out of the lane over a pile of stones and furze bushes, and at the end of the next field were confronted by a tall, stone-faced bank. Every one, always excepting myself, was riding with that furious valour which is so conspicuous when neighbouring hunts meet, and the leading half-dozen charged the obstacle at steeplechase speed. I caught a glimpse of the young lady in the grey habit, sitting square and strong as her mare topped the bank, with Flurry and the redoubtable Mr. Tomsy Flood riding on either hand; I followed in their wake, with a blind confidence in the Quaker, and none at all in myself. He refused it. I suppose it was in token of affection and gratitude that I fell upon his neck: at all events, I had reason to respect his judgment, as, before I had recovered myself, the hounds were straggling back into the field by a gap lower down.

THE REDOUBTABLE MR. TOMSY FLOOD

It finally appeared that the hounds could do no more with the line they had been hunting, and we proceeded to jog interminably, I knew not whither. During this unpleasant process Flurry Knox bestowed on me many items of information, chiefly as to the pangs of jealousy he was inflicting on Mr. Flood by his attentions to the lady in the grey habit, Miss 'Bobbie' Bennett.

'She'll have all old Handcock's money one of these days—she's his niece, y' know—and she's a good girl to ride, but she's not as young as she was ten years ago. You'd be looking at a chicken a long time before you thought of her! She might take Tomsy some day if she can't do any better.' He stopped and looked at me with a gleam in his eye. 'Come on, and I'll introduce you to her!'

Before, however, this privilege could be mine, the whole cavalcade was stopped by a series of distant yells, which apparently conveyed information to the hunt, though to me they only suggested a Red Indian scalping his enemy. The yells travelled rapidly nearer, and a young man with a scarlet face and a long stick sprang upon the fence, and explained that he and Patsy Lorry were after chasing a hare two miles down out of the hill above, and ne'er a dog nor a one with them but themselves, and she was lying, bet out, under a bush, and Patsy Lorry was minding her until the hounds would come. I had a vision of the humane Patsy Lorry fanning the hare with his hat, but apparently nobody else found the fact unusual. The hounds were hurried into the fields, the hare was again spurred into action, and I was again confronted with the responsibilities of the chase. After the first five minutes I had discovered several facts about the Quaker. If the bank was above a certain height he refused it irrevocably, if it accorded with his ideas he got his fore-legs over and ploughed through the rest of it on his stifle-joints, or, if a gripe made this inexpedient, he remained poised on top till the fabric crumbled under his weight. In the case of walls he butted them down with his knees, or squandered them with his hind-legs. These operations took time, and the leaders of the hunt streamed further and further away over the crest of a hill, while the Quaker pursued at the equable gallop of a horse in the Bayeux Tapestry.

I began to perceive that I had been adopted as a pioneer by a small band of followers, who, as one of their number candidly explained, 'liked to have some one ahead of them to soften the banks,' and accordingly waited respectfully till the Quaker had made the rough places smooth, and taken the raw edge off the walls. They, in their turn, showed me alternative routes when the obstacle proved above the Quaker's limit; thus, in ignoble confederacy, I and the off-scourings of the Curranhilty hunt pursued our way across some four miles of country. When at length we parted it was with extreme regret on both sides. A river crossed our course, with boggy banks pitted deep with the hoof-marks of our forerunners; I suggested it to the Quaker, and discovered that Nature had not in vain endued him with the hindquarters of the hippopotamus. I presume the others had jumped it; the Quaker, with abysmal flounderings, walked through and heaved himself to safety on the farther bank. It was the dividing of the ways. My friendly company turned aside as one man, and I was left with the world before me, and no guide save

the hoof-marks in the grass. These presently led me to a road, on the other side of which was a bank, that was at once added to the Quaker's black list. The rain had again begun to fall heavily, and was soaking in about my elbows; I suddenly asked myself

HE REMAINED POISED ON TOP TILL THE FABRIC CRUMBLED UNDER HIS WEIGHT

why, in Heaven's name, I should go any further. No adequate reason occurred to me, and I turned in what I believed to be the direction of Drumcurran.

I rode on for possibly two or three miles without seeing a human being, until, from the top of a hill I descried a solitary

lady rider. I started in pursuit. The rain kept blurring my eye-glass, but it seemed to me that the rider was a schoolgirl with hair hanging down her back, and that her horse was a trifle lame. I pressed on to ask my way, and discovered that I had been privileged to overtake no less a person than Miss Bobbie Bennett.

My question as to the route led to information of a varied character. Miss Bennett was going that way herself; her mare had given her what she called 'a toss and a half,' whereby she had strained her arm and the mare her shoulder, her habit had been torn, and she had lost all her hairpins.

'I'm an awful object,' she concluded; 'my hair's the plague of my life out hunting! I declare I wish to goodness I was bald!'

I struggled to the level of the occasion with an appropriate protest. She had really very brilliant grey eyes, and her complexion was undeniable. Philippa has since explained to me that it is a mere male fallacy that any woman can look well with her hair down her back, but I have always maintained that Miss Bobbie Bennett, with the rain glistening on her dark tresses, looked uncommonly well.

'I shall never get it dry for the dance to-night,' she complained.

'I wish I could help you,' said I.

'Perhaps you've got a hairpin or two about you!' said she, with a glance that had certainly done great execution before now.

I disclaimed the possession of any such tokens, but volunteered to go and look for some at a neighbouring cottage.

The cottage door was shut, and my knockings were answered by a stupefied-looking elderly man. Conscious of my own absurdity, I asked him if he had any hairpins.

'I didn't see a hare this week!' he responded in a slow bellow.

'Hairpins!' I roared; 'has your wife any hairpins?'

'She has not.' Then, as an after-thought, 'She's dead these ten years.'

At this point a young woman emerged from the cottage, and, with many coy grins, plucked from her own head some half-dozen hairpins, crooked, and grey with age, but still hairpins, and as such well worth my shilling. I returned with my spoil to Miss Bennett, only to be confronted with a fresh difficulty. The arm that she had strained was too stiff to raise to her head.

Miss Bobbie turned her handsome eyes upon me. 'It's no use,' she said plaintively, 'I can't do it!'

I looked up and down the road; there was no one in sight. I offered to do it for her.

Miss Bennett's hair was long, thick, and soft; it was also slippery with rain. I twisted it conscientiously, as if it were a hay rope, until Miss Bennett, with an irrepressible shriek, told me it would break off. I coiled the rope with some success, and proceeded to nail it to her head with the hairpins. At all the most critical points one, if not both, of the horses moved; hairpins were driven home into Miss Bennett's skull, and were with difficulty plucked forth again; in fact, a more harrowing performance can hardly be imagined, but Miss Bennett bore it with the heroism of a pin-cushion.

I was putting the finishing touches to the coiffure when some sound made me look round, and I beheld at a distance of some fifty yards the entire hunt approaching us at a foot pace. I lost my head, and, instead of continuing my task, I dropped the last hairpin as if it were red-hot, and kicked the Quaker away to the far side of the road, thus, if it were possible, giving the position away a shade more generously.

There were fifteen riders in the group that overtook us, and fourteen of them, including the Whip, were grinning from ear to ear; the fifteenth was Mr. Tomsy Flood, and he showed no sign of appreciation. He shoved his horse past me and up to Miss Bennett, his red moustache bristling, truculence in every outline of his heavy shoulders. His green coat was muddy, and his hat had a cave in it. Things had apparently gone ill with him.

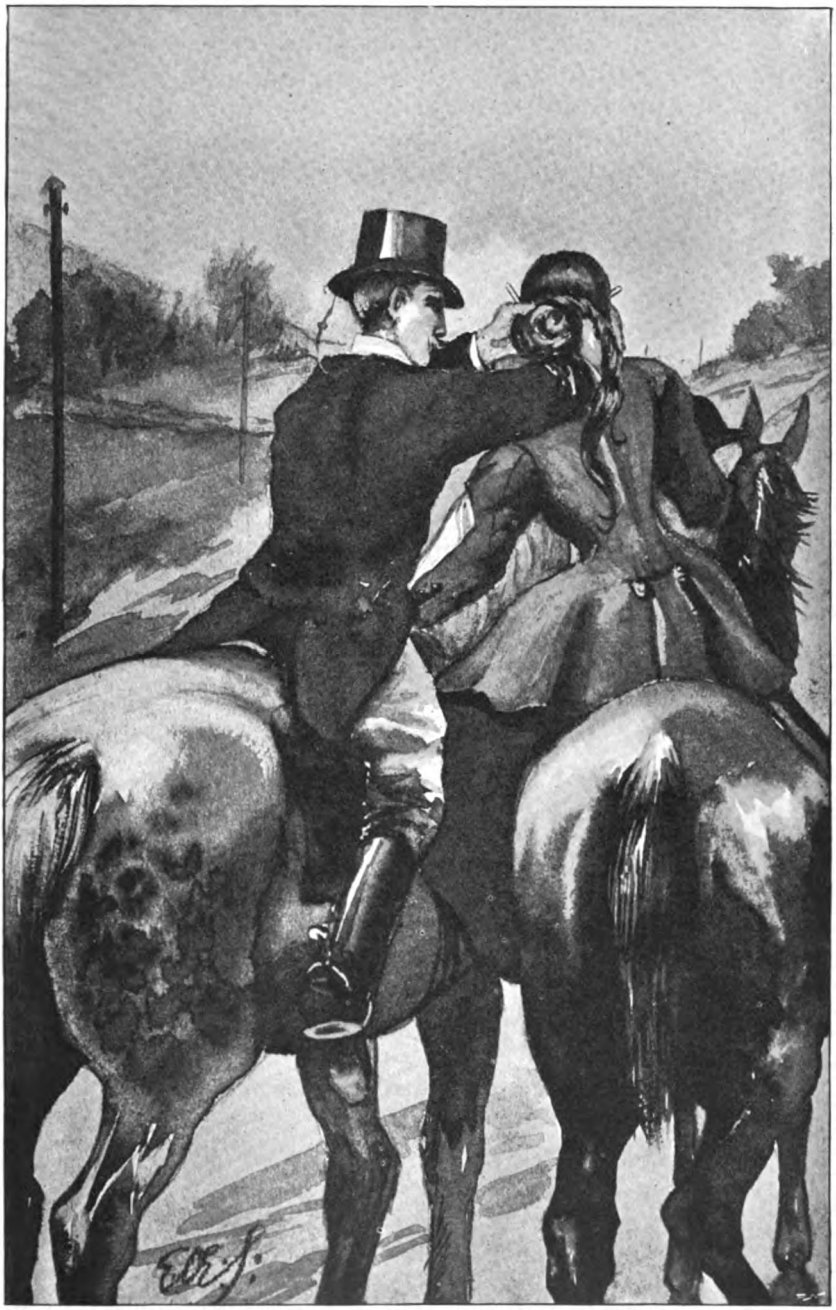
Flurry's witticisms held out for about two miles and a half; I do not give them, because they were not amusing, but they all dealt ultimately with the animosity that I, in common with himself, should henceforth have to fear from Mr. Flood.

'Oh, he's a holy terror!' he said conclusively; 'he was riding the tails off the hounds to-day to best me. He was near killing me twice. We had some words about it, I can tell you. I very near took my whip to him. Such a bull-rider of a fellow I never saw! He wouldn't so much as stop to catch Bobbie Bennett's horse when I picked her up, he was riding so jealous. His own girl, mind you! And such a crumpler as she got too! I declare she knocked a groan out of the road when she struck it!'

'She doesn't seem so much hurt?' I said.

'Hurt!' said Flurry, flicking casually at a hound. 'You couldn't hurt that one unless you took a hatchet to her!'

The rain had reached a pitch that put further hunting out of the question, and we bumped home at that intolerable pace



I WAS JUST PUTTING THE FINISHING TOUCHES TO THE COIFFURE

known as a 'hounds' jog.' I spent the remainder of the afternoon over a fire in my bedroom in the Royal Hotel, Drumcurran, official letters to write having mercifully provided me with an excuse for seclusion, while the bar and the billiard-room hummed below, and the Quaker's three-cornered gallop wreaked its inevitable revenge upon my person. As this process continued, and I became proportionately embittered, I asked myself, not for the first time, what Philippa would say when introduced to my present circle of acquaintances.

I have already mentioned that a dance was to take place at the hotel, given, as far as I could gather, by the leading lights of the Curranhilty Hunt. A less jocund guest than the wreck who at the pastoral hour of nine crept stiffly down to 'chase the glowing hours with flying feet' could hardly have been encountered. The dance was held in the coffee-room, and a conspicuous object outside the door was a saucer bath full of something that looked like flour.

'Rub your feet in that,' said Flurry; 'that's French chalk! They hadn't time to do the floor, so they hit on this dodge.'

I complied with this encouraging direction, and followed him into the room. Dancing had already begun, and the first sight that met my eyes was Miss Bennett in a yellow dress waltzing with Mr. Tomsy Flood. She looked very handsome, and, in spite of her accident, she was getting round the sticky floor and her still more sticky partner with the swing of a racing cutter. Her eye caught mine immediately, and with confidence. Clearly our acquaintance that, in the space of twenty minutes, had blossomed tropically into hair-dressing, was not to be allowed to wither. Nor was I myself allowed to wither. Men, known and unknown, plied me with partners, till my shirt cuff was black with names, and the number of dances stretched away into the blue distance of to-morrow morning. The music was supplied by the organist of the church, who played with religious unction and at the pace of a processional hymn. I put forth into the mêlée with a junior Bennett, inferior in calibre to Miss Bobbie, but a strong goer, and, I fear, made but a sorry début in the eyes of Drumcurran. At every other moment I bumped into the unforeseen orbits of those who reversed, and of those who walked their partners backwards down the room with faces of ineffable supremacy. Being unskilled in these intricacies of an elder civilisation, the younger Miss Bennett fared but ingloriously at my hands; the music pounded interminably on, until the heel of Mr. Flood put a period to our sufferings.

'The nasty dirty filthy brute!' shrieked the younger Miss Bennett in a single breath; 'he's torn the gown off my back!'

She whirled me to the cloak-room; we parted, mutually unregretted, at its door, and by, I fear, common consent, evaded our second dance together.

Many, many times during the evening I asked myself why I did not go to bed. Perhaps it was the remembrance that my bed was situated some ten feet above the piano in a direct line; but, whatever was the reason, the night wore on and found me still working my way down my shirt cuff. I sat out as much as possible, and found my partners to be, as a body, pretty, talkative, and ill-dressed, and during the evening I had many and varied opportunities of observing the rapid progress of Mr. Knox's flirtation with Miss Bobbie Bennett. From No. 4 to No. 8 they were invisible; that they were behind a screen in the commercial-room might be inferred from Mr. Flood's thunder-cloud presence in the passage outside.

At No. 9 the young lady emerged for one of her dances with me; it was a barn dance, and particularly trying to my momently stiffening muscles; but Miss Bobbie, whether in dancing or sitting out, went in for 'the rigour of the game.' She was in as hard condition as one of her uncle's hounds, and for a full fifteen minutes I capered and swooped beside her, larding the lean earth as I went, and replying but spasmodically to her even flow of conversation.

'That'll take the stiffness out of you!' she exclaimed, as the organist slowed down reverentially to a conclusion. 'I had a bet with Flurry Knox over that dance. He said you weren't up to my weight at the pace!'

I led her forth to the refreshment table, and was watching with awe her fearless consumption of claret cup that I would not have touched for a sovereign, when Flurry, with a partner on his arm, strolled past us.

'Well, you won the gloves, Miss Bobbie!' he said. 'Don't you wish you may get them!'

'Gloves without the *g*, Mr. Knox!' replied Miss Bennett, in a voice loud enough to reach the end of the passage, where Mr. Thomas Flood was burying his nose in a very brown whiskey-and-soda.

'Your hair's coming down!' retorted Flurry. 'Ask Major Yeates if he can spare you a few hairpins!'

Swifter than lightning Miss Bennett hurled a macaroon at her retreating foe, missed him, and subsided laughing on to a

sofa. I mopped my brow and took my seat beside her, wondering how much longer I could live up to the social exigencies of Drumcurran.

Miss Bennett, however, proved excellent company. She told me artfully, and inch by inch, all that Mr. Flood had said to her on the subject of my hair-dressing; she admitted that she had,

MR. FLOOD'S THUNDERCLOUD PRESENCE

as a punishment, cut him out of three dances and given them to Flurry Knox. When I remarked that in fairness they should have been given to me, she darted a very attractive glance at me, and pertinently observed that I had not asked for them.

> As steals the dawn into a fevered room,
> And says 'Be of good cheer, the day is born!'

so did the rumour of supper pass among the chaperons, male and

female. It was obviously due to a sense of the fitness of things that Mrs. Bennett was apportioned to me, and I found myself in the gratifying position of heading with her the procession to supper. My impressions of Mrs. Bennett are few but salient. She wore an apple-green satin dress and filled it tightly; rightly mistrusting the hotel supper, she had imported sandwiches and cake in a pocket-handkerchief, and, warmed by two glasses of sherry, she made me the recipient of the remarkable confidence that she had but two back teeth in her head, but, thank God, they met. When, with the other starving men, I fell upon the remains of the feast, I regretted that I had declined her offer of a sandwich.

Of the remainder of the evening I am unable to give a detailed account. Let it not for one instant be imagined that I had looked upon the wine of the Royal Hotel when it was red, or, indeed, any other colour; as a matter of fact, I had espied an inconspicuous corner in the entrance hall, and there I first smoked a cigarette, and subsequently sank into troubled sleep. Through my dreams I was aware of the measured pounding of the piano, of the clatter of glasses at the bar, of wheels in the street, and then, more clearly, of Flurry's voice assuring Miss Bennett that if she'd only wait for another dance he'd get the R.M. out of bed to do her hair for her—then again oblivion.

At some later period I was dropping down a chasm on the Quaker's back, and landing with a shock; I was twisting his mane into a chignon, when he turned round his head and caught my arm in his teeth. I awoke with the dew of terror on my forehead, to find Miss Bennett leaning over me in a scarlet cloak with a hood over her head, and shaking me by my coat sleeve.

'Major Yeates,' she began at once in a hurried whisper, 'I want you to find Flurry Knox, and tell him there's a plan to feed his hounds at six o'clock this morning so as to spoil their hunting!'

'How do you know?' I asked, jumping up.

'My little brother told me. He came in with us to-night to see the dance, and he was hanging round in the stables, and he heard one of the men telling another there was a dead mule in an outhouse in Bride's Alley, all cut up ready to give to Mr. Knox's hounds.'

'But why shouldn't they get it?' I asked in sleepy stupidity.

'Is it fill them up with an old mule just before they're going out hunting?' flashed Miss Bennett. 'Hurry and tell Mr. Knox; don't let Tomsy Flood see you telling him—or any one else.'

'Oh, then it's Mr. Flood's game?' I said, grasping the situation at length.

'It is,' said Miss Bennett, suddenly turning scarlet; 'he's a disgrace! I'm ashamed of him! I'm done with him!'

I resisted a strong disposition to shake Miss Bennett by the hand.

'I can't wait,' she continued. 'I made my mother drive back a mile—she doesn't know a thing about it—I said I'd left my purse in the cloak-room. Good-night! Don't tell a soul but Flurry!'

She was off, and upon my incapable shoulders rested the responsibility of the enterprise.

It was past four o'clock, and the last bars of the last waltz were being played. At the bar a knot of men, with Flurry in their midst, were tossing 'Odd man out' for a bottle of champagne. Flurry was not in the least drunk, a circumstance worthy of remark in his present company, and I got him out into the hall and unfolded my tidings. The light of battle lit in his eye as he listened.

'I knew by Tomsy he was shaping for mischief,' he said coolly; 'he's taken as much liquor as'd stiffen a tinker, and he's only half-drunk this minute. Hold on till I get Jerome Hickey and Charlie Knox—they're sober; I'll be back in a minute.'

I was not present at the council of war thus hurriedly convened; I was merely informed when they returned that we were all to 'hurry on.' My best evening pumps have never recovered the subsequent proceedings. They, with my swelled and aching feet inside them, were raced down one filthy lane after another, until, somewhere on the outskirts of Drumcurran, Flurry pushed open the gate of a yard and went in. It was nearly five o'clock on that raw December morning; low down in the sky a hazy moon shed a diffused light; all the surrounding houses were still and dark. At our footsteps an angry bark or two came from inside the stable.

'Whisht!' said Flurry, 'I'll say a word to them before I open the door.'

At his voice a chorus of hysterical welcome arose; without more delay he flung open the stable door, and instantly we were all knee deep in a rush of hounds. There was not a moment lost. Flurry started at a quick run out of the yard with the whole pack pattering at his heels. Charley Knox vanished; Dr. Hickey and I followed the hounds, splashing into puddles and hobbling over patches of broken stones, till we left the town behind and hedges arose on either hand.

'Here's the house!' said Flurry, stopping short at a low entrance gate; 'many's the time I've been here when his father had it; it'll be a queer thing if I can't find a window I can manage, and the old cook he has is as deaf as the dead.'

He and Dr. Hickey went in at the gate with the hounds; I hesitated ignobly in the mud.

'This isn't an R.M's. job,' said Flurry in a whisper, closing the gate in my face; 'you stole a horse with me, but you'd best keep clear of house-breaking.'

I accepted his advice, but I may admit that before I turned for home a sash was gently raised, a light had sprung up in one of the lower windows, and I heard Flurry's voice saying, 'Over, over, over!' to his hounds.

There seemed to me to be no interval at all between these events and the moment when I woke in bright sunlight to find Dr. Hickey standing by my bedside in a red coat with a tall glass in his hand.

'It's nine o'clock,' he said. 'I'm just after waking Flurry Knox. There wasn't one stirring in the hotel till I went down and pulled the "boots" from under the kitchen table! It's well for us the meet's in the town; and, by-the-bye, your grey horse has four legs on him the size of bolsters this morning; he won't be fit to go out, I'm afraid. Drink this anyway, you're in the want of it.'

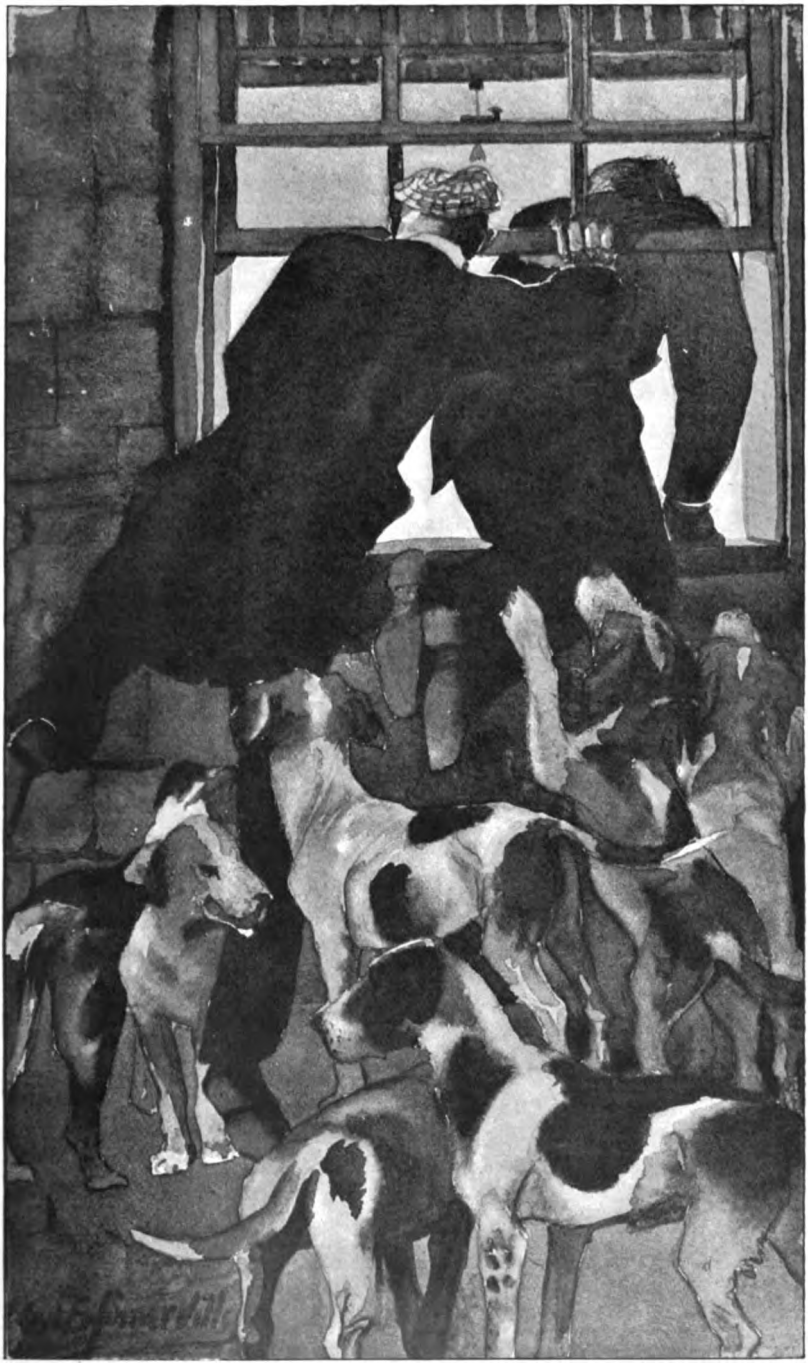
Dr. Hickey's eyelids were rather pink, but his hand was as steady as a rock. The whiskey-and-soda was singularly untempting.

'What happened last night?' I asked eagerly as I gulped it.

'Oh, it all went off very nicely, thank you,' said Hickey, twisting his black beard to a point. 'We benched as many of the hounds in Flood's bed as'd fit, and we shut the lot into the room. We had them just comfortable when we heard his latchkey below at the door.' He broke off and began to snigger.

'Well?' I said, sitting bolt upright.

'Well, he got in at last, and he lit a candle then. That took him five minutes. He was pretty tight. We were looking at him over the banisters until he started to come up, and according as he came up, we went on up the top flight. He stood admiring his candle for a while on the landing, and we wondered he didn't hear the hounds snuffing under the door. He opened it then, and, on the minute, three of them bolted out between his legs.' Dr. Hickey again paused to indulge in Mephistophelian laughter. 'Well, you know,' he went on, 'when a man in poor Tomsy's condition sees six dogs jumping out of his bed he's apt



A LIGHT HAD SPRUNG UP IN ONE OF THE LOWER WINDOWS

to make a wrong diagnosis. He gave a roar, and pitched the candlestick at them, and ran for his life downstairs, and all the hounds after him. "Gone away!" screeches that devil Flurry, pelting downstairs on top of them in the dark. I believe I screeched too.'

'Good heavens!' I gasped, 'I was well out of that!'

'Well, you were,' admitted the Doctor. 'However, Tomsy bested them in the dark, and he got to ground in the pantry. I heard the cups and saucers go as he slammed the door on the hounds' noses, and the minute he was in Flurry turned the key on him. "They're real dogs, Tomsy, my buck!" says Flurry, just to quiet him; and there we left him.'

'Was he hurt?' I asked, conscious of the triviality of the question.

'Well, he lost his brush,' replied Dr. Hickey. 'Old Merrylegs tore the coat-tails off him; we got them on the floor when we struck a light; Flurry has them to nail on his kennel door. Charley Knox had a pleasant time too,' he went on, 'with the man that brought the barrow-load of meat to the stable. We picked out the tastiest bits and arranged them round Flood's breakfast table for him. They smelt very nice. Well, I'm delaying you with my talking——'

Flurry's hounds had the run of the season that day. I saw it admirably throughout—from Miss Bennett's pony cart. She drove extremely well, in spite of her strained arm.

A LION HUNT

BY H. L. HEBER PERCY

An August evening in '97 saw me floating in a dug-out, lazily, driftingly, down the oily current of the Mdingidingi river, in South Africa, revelling in the coming coolness of the day's decline, yet keenly conscious of the charm of never knowing at what moment some unexpected chance of using my favourite weapons, then lying at my side, might not present itself.

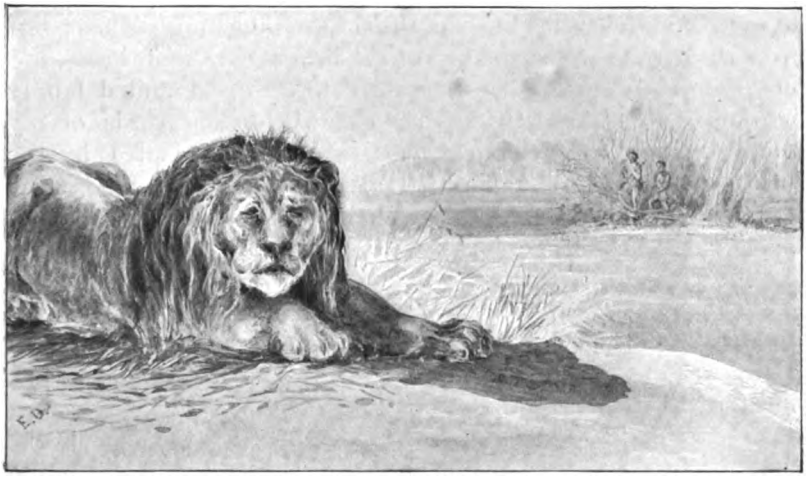
My Kaffirs paddled slowly in harmony with the delicious quiet of the scene, their bronzed muscles moving with perfect ease, their tongues tied in sympathy with the surrounding calm, whilst yet, with timely, noiseless stroke they kept our bows in mid-channel, and swept us clear of every bank or bar of sand that here and there fretted the current of the stream.

Alligators lay sleeping, perhaps philosophising, on every sand bank, in the hush of the evening, undisturbed by our silent passage, and here and there a herd of waterbuck or of brindled gnu fed close down to the banks, and barely raised their heads as we glided by them. Birds of beautiful plumage hawked their insect food over the glass of the stream which mirrored their painted beauty, and kingfishers hung poised like living jewels, quivering in the sunset, till, with a fall like a flash of light, they broke the surface and bore away their silver prey.

My rifles lay beside me, a ·303 and ·577, for I was returning from a shooting trip up towards the Zambesi, and making my way down to Beira, on the East Coast of Africa, to embark for England; but I had not much hope of their being of further service. I was alone, and had been so for many months; sport had been good, toil incessant, but I had made a more than average bag of all sorts of game, and I was content; my only longing now was for the grip of an English hand and the sound of

an English tongue. But all was not yet over; for as we swept by a sandbank in the bend of the stream I recognised a country where I had seen good buffalo spoor when going north, and as I wished to get a better head than I had as yet secured, I called a halt, and my Kaffir boys paddled gladly in, nothing loth to spend a couple of days in peace—that was their dream no doubt —and they quickly pitched my tent, a flimsy canvas at best, that did not take long to put up, on the top of the sandbank.

The boys themselves camped nearer to the canoe, about 150 yards away from me, and close to the river, which here described an arc, whose chord, a straight line of high cane or reed, enclosed



THERE LAY A GRANDLY MANED LION, SEEMINGLY ASLEEP

a bare patch of sandbank some 400 yards in length by 300 in width, on which our camp was formed.

Buffalo tracks were here in abundance, and I felt sure of success in that line—at any rate I meant doing all I knew; but I noticed besides a large number of lion tracks on the *silver* sand, and the idea crossed my mind that I might yet come to terms with one. This was only a passing thought, however, as I had heard those folk roaring almost every night, and I paid no further attention beyond thinking that they were rather ridiculous beasts, that talked very big at night and yet took very good care not to give themselves away by day. I was, however, eventually destined to make a closer acquaintance than was perhaps strictly necessary, and to receive a formal call in due course, but still

out of visiting hours, one which might almost indeed have looked like an intrusion; and this was the how.

After I had finished my supper and pulled my blankets over me, my boys having gone to their own camp, I lay awake reading, until I was forced to listen to a concert, which, gradually swelling on the night air, commanded attention by its solemn beauty. Roll after roll, roar after roar, in one grand harmony, the great voices of the mighty beasts shattered the silence. Who shall describe such a sound? Beautiful and strong as nothing else, the air pulses with its power. I have heard the cough of a charging tiger, the moaning roar—or complaint if you will—that he makes also in the dead of night, putting the jungles for miles around him under the hush of fear, into crouching silence; but even this grand voice strikes on a lower key, and here—not one—nor two—nor three—but a whole troop—a united family of hungry hunters, were crying out within 300 yards of my flimsy canvas. As I listened entranced and fascinated by the fury and force of it, again and again from afar came pealing back a double echo, roar for roar, challenge for challenge; in ever-increasing nearness and harmony the answers rang from another and more distant troop.

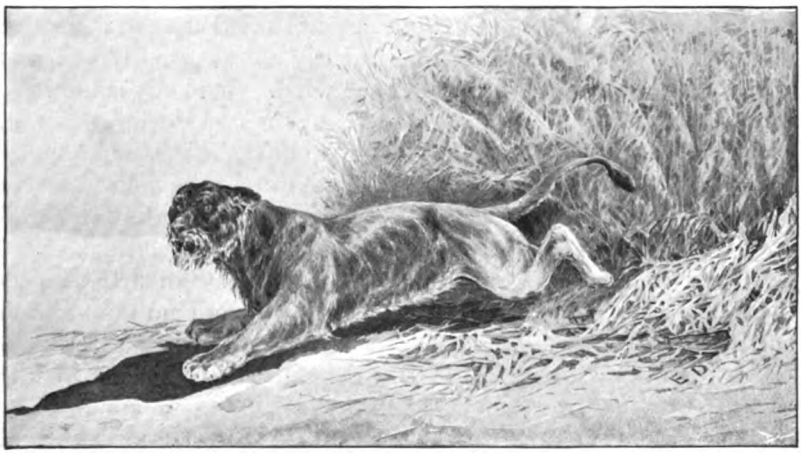
Who shall say what I felt? I enjoyed it keenly, having no idea or sense of fear, as I had become so thoroughly accustomed to hearing the lions roar in the distance, and it had not struck me that I should prevent their coming too close—in fact, I thought no more of the near roaring than I had ever done of the more distant thunder; but soon these sounds were hushed, and before long I heard buffalo grunting close by. It is curious to note this trait in the buffalo's character; where not much shot at he is more or less a friendly dispositioned animal, or at any rate a fearless one, as he will sometimes feed up to within 100 yards of your tent; and this happened once to my knowledge. My boys were chattering round their fire, and I, being then after elephant, did not care to disturb the less desired game, so taking the lantern I waved it at them outside, and they moved quietly away without stampede or hurry.

After an early breakfast, I started next morning, accompanied by four Kaffir boys, to find the buffalo, making up my mind to a hard day's work. Yet how little do we know what is before us! I was carrying my ·577 express, whilst 'Pinto,' a tall and splendidly made Zulu, the only boy on whom I could hope to rely at a pinch, carried my ·303, the rest following. After walking some 300 yards, partly through heavy cane-brake, we

SIX GRAND BEASTS IN ALL

emerged on an open piece of ground, a cane surrounded amphitheatre, with one small opening on the further side; and there, where the ground was clear, I noticed some animal lying down, which I concluded must be a buck that the lions had killed during the night. Paying no attention to this, I was walking steadily on, when one of my boys whistled softly, and pointing, spoke the magic word 'Ngonyamo.' I put up my binocular to make sure, and found that the boy was right. There lay a grandly maned lion, seemingly asleep.

I at once proceeded to stalk him, closely followed by Pinto, and we crawled up to within about ninety yards, but were unable to get nearer owing to a dip in the ground, on the further side of which he lay atop of the rise. We succeeded in getting behind



SHE ANSWERED TO THE SHOT

a small detached clump of some dozen stalks of cane, and once there I took a careful sight and fired, hitting him fair and square. On receiving the bullet he sprang into the air with a hoarse grunt of rage and pain, and disappeared with two or three great bounds into the cane on my left, when, to my surprise, another lion sprang out of the growth on my right, and crossing the narrow space disappeared after the first; and though I fired at once he, I think, escaped untouched. But this was not all; for no sooner had he gone than a third showed, followed by another and yet another, till six grand beasts in all had passed in quick succession. It was a glorious sight, and one that I shall never forget. Jamming in another cartridge, I fired again at the last one, a fine lioness, and hit her fairly, for she answered

to the shot with a loud grunt; but flourishing her tail she disappeared after the others.

By this time all my boys had run away except Pinto, who stood by me till I had wounded the second, when he ran off too; but stopping and looking back I beckoned to him, and he pluckily rejoined me, and then whispered that we must get back as quickly as possible, for the lions would in all probability work round for our wind, and if only one had seen us, we should have the united troop down on the top of us. This latter assertion of his, *I* rather doubted, but at any rate, concluding that discretion was the better part of valour, we retreated as far as the trees on the edge of the glade, and climbing up one of them, gained a splendid position from which to cover the open ground.

We had hardly been quiet in the tree for three minutes, when we saw two lions stalk out of the cane and stand close to the fringe of it, about eighty yards away, evidently acting exactly as Pinto had foretold, and straining to get our wind. Suddenly something went wrong; the thieves fell out, and a furious fight began. They reared up on their hind legs, slapping, biting, and cursing at each other in the finest form. I would have given anything to have been able to photograph them as they fought, and to phonograph the sounds emitted in their fury. It was glorious to see and hear them, and I enjoyed it thoroughly as an artistic performance, as also did Pinto I think, all the more no doubt from our having a safe seat from which to observe so rare a sight.

Never taking my eyes off the lions, I had managed in the meantime to throw my left arm round a bough, and so to secure my position. The moment they came to the ground I fired at the biggest and hit him heavily. With a grunt and a slight flourish of his tail he acknowledged the hit, while his massive head drooped to the ground, his fore-legs straddled wide, and he blundered staggering towards the cane, which I thought he could never reach. This he did, however, and I watched the canes bend and shake as he passed through till he reached a bush, at which he seemed to stop, and I then turned my attention to the other one, which also I feel sure that I hit, as afterwards I found two blood spoors from the place where the lions had stood. On firing the second shot out of the tree, the recoil from the comparatively heavy charge knocked my feet off the bough, and had I not luckily had my arm round another branch, I should have had a heavy fall.

I had now to consider what was best to do, as I was very keen to handle some of these lion skins, and yet had no desire to run

any unnecessary risks; so after some consideration I came to the conclusion that I had better wait a little, see what might happen, and at any rate give the wounded animals time to die if they would, or failing that, for their wounds to stiffen.

Meanwhile, the lions continued roaring loudly, but I could see nothing more of them, though by the sound they appeared to be moving away towards the open plain, when, to my joy, I saw vultures soaring round above them, then dropping lower and

A FURIOUS FIGHT BEGAN

lower. Several of them actually settled in the cane, close to the bush at which the last lion but one had to all appearance stopped, some more settled at another place in the cane, and others still kept wheeling further off, apparently over a wounded animal. Both Pinto and I at once jumped at the conclusion that there were two lions dead, and one more heavily wounded, and I began to wonder whether I had enough preserving powder or paste left to cure their skins; further, whether it would be safe to skin them where they lay, or whether I had better have them carried

into camp. Thus counting my chickens before they were hatched.

After waiting for about an hour I was disappointed to realise that the vultures had diminished in number, and that none were continuing to settle, but I still hoped that this might be due to their having spotted us in the tree, and that they were only waiting till we had gone, or else that another lion was on the move, and they were afraid to go down.

Being now det rmined to get a fresh supply of ·577 cartridge, as I had only one left, on account of the Kaffirs having bolted with my spare ones, but very unwilling to lose the chance of another shot, which I might very well do if I went myself to camp, I asked Pinto to go and get me some; but this he flatly refused to do, so I told him that I would go, and that he must remain on watch in the tree, with my ·577, till my return, to which, after some demur, he consented. As I scrambled down from the tree, my eye was caught by the scores and seams in the bark made evidently by the lions when sharpening or cleaning their claws. They would seem to have the same habit as have the tigers and panthers in India, where in any wild jungle you will frequently find the soft bark of the semul or cotton trees, among others, heavily scored in this manner.

With the ·303 in my hand, I now started for camp, passing through the 200 yards of cane brake which intervened as quietly and quickly as I well could, and there I found a gang of strange Kaffirs who were going up the river in a dug-out, whom I endeavoured to coax into accompanying me and my boys in our hunt after the lions. Even 'a little temptation' failed, as they said that they had urgent business to attend to elsewhere, and they attended to it with the utmost promptitude.

Having replenished my cartridge bag and left one Kaffir at the camp, I took the other back to the tree in which Pinto was seated, and asked for news. He had seen nothing more, except that some few vultures had returned; so after some delay I got the boys to accompany me to the place where I had hit the last two lions, and as soon as we got there we found a heavy trail of blood into the cane, which we bombarded at once with clods, and getting no response, all went slowly along the spoor. I soon caught sight, however, of a second blood spoor running parallel to us on the left, and pointed it out to Pinto; but this was too strong, and all the boys at once declined to go on, as they said that it was too dangerous and not business; so we had to fall back.

HIS MASSIVE HEAD DROPPED TOWARDS THE GROUND, HIS FORELEGS STRADDLED WIDE

On reaching the open again, they explained that, had it been a question of following up one wounded lion only, they would not have minded continuing on the spoor; but that with three or four, and in such heavy jungle, the thing was impossible—that we might pass close to one whilst on the trail of another, and be charged at any moment. I remembered, however, in spite of all this, that the boys—including Pinto even, though he stopped quickly—had all bolted like hares when I had shot a lioness on a previous occasion. Such being the case, we decided to go to the furthest point, where I had shot the first two lions; but, on arrival, after following the spoor a little way into the cane, the boys again refused to go on. Determined to get the beasts somehow, even if I had to spoil their skins, I circled round outside the cane, firing through the high grass in several places up wind, hoping in this way to burn the cane, and hunt the unwounded ones out. Unfortunately the grass would not burn well, and the fire only ran through the cane, burning it in patches and streaks, taking the dry leaves and rubbish underneath, but not laying hold on the cane itself.

After sitting down and waiting some time under the shade of the tree we had previously climbed, and giving the boys time to pull themselves together a bit, I again persuaded them to follow me into the cane, at the same spot where we had first entered it, as we had seen the vultures settling anew. This time we got a bit further in on the spoors, and Pinto picked up a piece of bone with fresh blood on it, a memento out of the third lion I had hit; a little further on we came on a big pool of blood, soaking the sand and grass, and further still, on a place where a third lion had joined the two others, and had lain down bleeding heavily. Pinto now whispered that he could hear one of them growling in front of us, and being unfortunately too deaf to rely upon my own hearing, and unable to see more than three or four yards into the tangled cane, I had to take his word for it, and again retire. Here the boys all made a stand, and refused to go in again. While the search was proceeding the fire had not reached this part of the cane, so we waited till it did so, and then, as it died down, I tried to put life into my boys once more; but it was no good, and Pinto alone, though his teeth were literally chattering with fear, came up to the scratch, which, under the circumstances, was good and plucky. We two then walked through and through the cane where it had been more or less opened up by the fire, and through a good deal of unburnt tangle as well, but all to no

purpose; so we circled outside the cane through the long grass right up to the river bank, up stream, seeking to pick up the lions' tracks should they have crossed the plain; but here again we failed.

Taking one more long turn through and through the cane in every direction and finding nothing, I at last threw up the sponge and walked very sadly back to camp, which I reached about sundown, to find that my boys had collected no firewood to speak of. I found them talking and, no doubt, discussing the situation, as they now informed me that they had been told by a party of Kaffirs who had passed us when we were up beyond the Moossapasso river (being themselves on their way to the Zambesi), that they had camped on the very sandbank we were now on, and had lost one of their men, carried away by the lions at night. Further, they told me that the lions would certainly return during the night to look for their mates, and, as I did not think this at all unlikely, I kept my ·577 handy and put some cartridges ready by me, after I had cleaned the rifles, had my supper, and turned in. On doing so, I noticed that the boy whose duty it was to wash my cups, plates, and cooking utensils, had neglected to do his work, and had left the things stacked carelessly on a bucket near the door of my tent. I suppose that he had been afraid to cross from his camp to mine in the dark, so did not call, though my fire too had died down, and wood to replenish it there was none.

It was now about ten o'clock. I had lain reading for some time, and after putting out my lantern, had curled up in my blankets, when the lions began to roar again. This banished sleep; so getting up I went outside to listen, and made out that they were coming nearer and nearer through the cane, so taking my binoculars, I lay down in position to use them through the opening of my tent doors, which were flapping quietly in the night air, and my rifle lay also under my hand ready for any eventuality.

As there was no moon it was very dark, though the night being clear some glimmer was given by the stars, and the sky-line could just be distinguished.

The roaring continued, and the volume of sound swelled—nearer and even nearer the angry voices echoed in unison, but in spite of binoculars it was some time before I made out the forms of any of the great beasts who were breaking my rest, till two of them moved up to where the crest of the sand rose against the horizon, and their forms loomed dark against the sky. Having satisfied myself in this way, I then moved back into my blankets and lay with my rifle alongside of me, my

long hunting knife stuck upright in the ground beside me, and fell to wondering what would happen next? It was the first time that I had heard lions roaring within eighty yards, and I was interested in listening to the low harsh 'gurr' which one can only hear at very close quarters.

Fancying that the lions were really moving down to the river to drink, I lay listening, when suddenly the noise ceased instantaneously, and was succeeded by the silence of the grave—a hush that could be absolutely felt seemed to fall on the night—and I knew instinctively that they had got my wind, and that if they meant giving trouble it would not be long in coming. Then I heard another sound, that of my boys poling the canoe away across the river, which was, perhaps, the wisest thing they could have done; they could not help me, as, having allowed their own fire to die out, they had no firebrands to hurl at the intruders.

Thus thrown on my own resources, I began to consider what was my wisest course. Should I light my lantern, giving the lions the chance of seeing me moving? Should I fire off my rifle, and so scare them and perhaps wantonly throw away my chance of getting on better terms with them next day? Should I join issue at once and try for them, with the odds so dead against any accurate shooting? This, I thought, would be foolish; and to have merely wounded one or two would have complicated matters. In this case, I should have to put rifle, head and shoulders out through the door of my tent, and should probably see nothing, as the beasts would be crouched flat, whilst I, on the contrary, should expose myself to view and a home charge, which, so long as I lay quiet, was improbable; and I thought too that, if charging, they would surely give three roars, as a tiger does when he means coming in, thus giving me warning; when, if they did not actually knock the tent down, or by chance charge in through the door, they could hardly get right in at me.

Having thus considered the situation in all its bearings I determined, like the Tar Baby, to lie low and say nothing; and this I did in a silence that was intense with a strained acuteness, in which the proverbial pin-drop would have sounded loud enough; and I wished I was out of it, and somewhere else where I could go to sleep in peace.

Crash, bang, clatter, and all was uproar for a moment, as the charging brute came right on the top of me, pressing in the canvas as he lit, but bounding instantly away behind my head, scared, I suppose, by the fall of all the tinplates, dishes, and

cooking utensils that my Kaffir had left at the tent corner uncleaned, and which he had luckily hit hard as he sprang, bringing them down with a clatter that was too much for his nerves. This was coming it a little too strong; so, shoving my rifle barrels outside the door, I fired a shot low, to make the hollow bullet sing, then turning round, I repeated the tune in the opposite direction, which I thought the lion had taken; and soon I had the satisfaction of hearing them all roar again in the cane, but now a good two hundred yards away. Lighting my lantern, I then went outside, and after firing again, aiming as well as I could judge by the sounds, I shouted to my Kaffirs to bring back the canoe, which they did immediately, coming up in a body to my tent. This was in itself a good performance, and one that I had not intended to ask of them, as I thought they would merely bring the boat to the bank below my tent. I explained what had happened, and told them that I intended crossing the river to get some sleep; so taking rifle, cartridges, lantern and blankets with us, we got into the canoe and poled across. But they would not even camp on the further bank, preferring to get what broken rest they could in the canoe.

All night the lions continued roaring, and at daybreak we recrossed the river, and went up to the tent, which we found they had not visited again, for we followed all their tracks as they had originally come down, and examined the spoor of the one who had so boldly charged the tent, which was plain enough. The Kaffirs were immensely interested and excited over this, as I fancy they had scarcely believed all I had told them the night before; and now came a further difficulty, for nothing that I could say or promise would induce the boys to accompany me again in one last bid for a lion's hide; they had thoroughly made up their minds that it was not good enough, were utterly demoralised, and said that if I persisted in stopping they would leave me; that they had made up their minds to go, that they would forfeit wages and all, rather than remain, and that they would not even stay on the other bank. Even Pinto failed me, and firmly, but I think regretfully, refused to accompany me for even one more little look round in the cane.

Feeling that all was over, and that I was powerless, I told the boys to pack up, and I myself went round to see if I could come across any of my friends; but was again disappointed. I certainly did not go right through the cane again, but went as far as I cared to go alone, and hunted carefully, when, finding nothing, I turned sorrowfully for camp, where I found the boys

all ready packed and waiting for me; so, with a sad heart, I got into the boat and paddled away down stream.

Thus ignominiously I was forced against my will to leave the lions more or less masters of the situation after all, though some of them were no doubt more sore than I was. But what more could I have done? Had there been a moon I have little doubt that I should have taken tea with some of them; but with no moon—no bait to entice them—a dense cane brake in which they hid by day, and no trustworthy man to back me and carry a second gun, it would have been folly to have tackled the lot alone. Sorely I longed for a good 'shikar' elephant, or even for a few good dogs, when I should have been more or less master of the situation, and this article would have been pleasanter reading at the last.

As for buffalo, I afterwards came upon an immense herd, and had the good luck to secure some very fine heads—but—sorrow's crown of sorrows lies in remembering—the lions.

REAL TENNIS

BY EUSTACE H. MILES, M.A.

Winner of the Gold Prize, 1897 *and* 1898

THE great Tennis match at Brighton, between Peter Latham (the English champion) and Tom Pettitt (the American champion), as well as the removal of the old Tennis court (under the Clock) at Lord's, make this a good opportunity for offering a few remarks about the 'Game of Kings;' and if I can do anything towards explaining the subject, or towards showing how it might be explained, it will I hope be welcome to the many spectators who are sometimes asked extremely harassing questions about the scoring by their lady friends.

Let me begin by pointing out a few fallacies.

1. It is a common belief that there are only two or three courts in England. As a matter of fact, thirty would be nearer the mark, for there are courts not only in London and its neighbourhood, but also at Brighton, Manchester, Oxford, and Cambridge (2), besides the private courts in various parts of England.

2. As to the fallacy that the scoring of Tennis cannot be learnt, it is true that it has been found hard to learn; but that is surely the fault of the teaching. Most subjects can be made hard to learn if the teacher will only begin to use the technical terms soon enough. 'Tambour,' 'grille,' 'hazard-side,' 'chase worse than two'—yes, of course, they're hard to learn if you *begin* with them.

3. A third fallacy is that Tennis is the same as Lawn Tennis. This may be christened 'the ladies' fallacy,' and may be illustrated by the following conversation.

Lady. I hear you are going to play Tennis this morning; won't it be rather wet?

Gentleman. I am going to play real Tennis, not Lawn Tennis. Real Tennis is played in a covered court.

Lady. Oh, indeed! Quite a new game then?

Gentleman. Yes; indeed, some hundreds of years ago Tennis was not played much.

Lady. Oh, then it must have been revived this last year—and I never heard of it!

Gentleman (in despair). Do you bicycle *very* much?

Tennis is the mother of Lawn Tennis, and though so many more people admire the daughter, it is partly because they have not been properly introduced to the mother. In fact, many of the best-known (past and present) Lawn Tennis players have shown great keenness for Tennis of late years. I need only mention the Renshaws, Chapman, Winkworth, Mahony, Nesbit, and R. F. Doherty.

I shall try to explain the game in a new way. I shall take it for granted that the reader understands Lawn Tennis already. This will simplify matters, and I shall only speak of the single game, as the four-handed game is rarely played to-day.

We have as a starting-point, for instance, two players, each with a large-headed racket, a ball of a certain size, a net over which the ball has to be hit, and the ordinary scoring, e.g. 15 love, 15 all, 30–15, 30 all, 40–30, deuce, vantage, deuce, vantage, game. The set consists of six games, though 'deuce and vantage games' can be played. 'Faults' and 'double faults' score as in Lawn Tennis.

And now for a few of the differences: I shall leave out a great many.

As to the *implements*, the Tennis racket has a smaller face and is heavier than the Lawn Tennis racket, because the Tennis ball, though about the same size, is also heavier (it is more like a cricket ball in this respect).

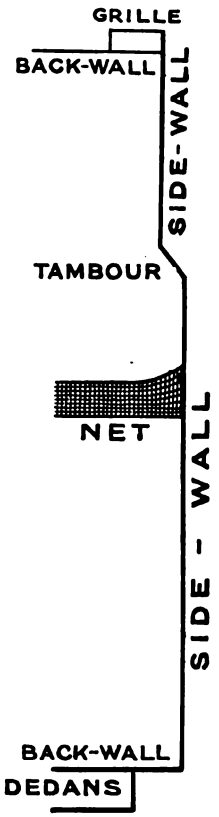


DIAGRAM I.—PLAN OF THE RIGHT-HAND SIDE-WALL

As to the *court*, the Tennis net is much higher at the ends than in the middle. The court itself has *walls* on all its four sides, and a pent-house round three sides. The best way to describe the court will be to put the reader at the end of the court, behind the netting, where the spectators usually sit, i.e. in the *dedans* (the French for 'inside'). Any ball which is played over the net into this *dedans* counts as a winning stroke.

Now look in front of you, over the net, and down the right-hand wall. It does not go straight along, but there is a buttress sticking out, called the *tambour*. A ball hit against this will come off at an angle which puzzles beginners. Diagram 1 will give some idea of this *tambour*.

Past the *tambour*, in the wall at the end of the court, is a little 'cupboard without a door,' called the *grille*, and when a ball is played over the net into this *grille* it is a winning stroke. Lawn Tennis has no winning strokes of this kind, though they could be arranged if the players agreed that whoever managed to hit a certain chair or lady's parasol (just outside the court) should score the point.

Now look down the left-hand side, and you will see many openings with nettings; these are called the *galleries*, and the furthest away from you is called the *winning gallery*, because a ball played over the net into it is a winning stroke.

Across the floor are many lines, of which we shall see the meaning directly.

As to *the game itself*, we have already seen that it is different from Lawn Tennis in two or three respects; viz. that

(i) It has certain 'openings,' into which it is a winning stroke to play the ball.

(ii) It has *side-walls and back-walls*. Many strokes which would go 'out' in Lawn Tennis, either at the back or at the side, are all right in Tennis, because they hit the wall and come back into the court. This makes an enormous difference to the game, apart from the fact that the Tennis court is larger than a Lawn Tennis court. It is a common stroke in Tennis to hit a ball up against the side-wall first before it goes over the net, instead of straight over the net as in Lawn Tennis; this gives the ball a great spin, and is called 'boasting.'

(iii) Another difference is in the *service*; for not only can the server stand anywhere in the court, but he always serves from the same side of the court (the *dedans* side, the side on which you are sitting), and he has to serve on to the pent-house at the left (see diagram 4). This is a great contrast to Lawn Tennis, where the service may be from either side, and is nearly always the over-hand service; in Tennis the service is far more varied, for Saunders (the late English Champion), Latham,and Pettitt, all have different special services. The opponent is allowed to volley the service.

(iv) The *stroke* also is very different, as a rule, though the back-hander at Lawn Tennis is nearer to the back-hander at Tennis than it used to be. We may notice two Tennis strokes especially; viz:

(*a*) The hard drive, especially the drive for the winning 'openings' (see above), which would go flying past the opponent's head and out of court at Lawn Tennis; and

(*b*) The *cut-stroke*. Instead of meeting the ball direct with the open face of the racket, the racket often comes 'chopping down on to it' and 'slicing it;' the ball does not hit the racket straight in the face, but at an angle (see diagram 2). The result is that it travels slower and gets a spin on it, and when it hits the back wall it tends to drop down suddenly. The correct old school of players used to hold the head of the racket up and the handle down, but nowadays there is more free and

DIAGRAM 2.—POSITION OF THE RACKET FOR THE FOREHAND-STROKE, ACCORDING TO THE BADMINTON LIBRARY

easy play, more 'simple' hitting, more hard volleying and half volleying.

You will generally know a Tennis player, when he plays Lawn Tennis, by this 'cut;' his balls will hang in the air, and you will have to hold your racket firmer and to hit harder in order to get them up; nevertheless the cut-stroke seldom pays at Lawn Tennis.

And now we come to a great difference between the two games, viz.:

(v) The *Chases*. In Lawn Tennis, when a ball has hit the ground twice, the round is over; but this is not always so at Tennis, for under certain conditions you can let a ball bounce twice, and yet not lose the point. 'Why should one leave a ball alone?' you ask. Well, sometimes it can't be reached in time,

and sometimes there would be very little chance of getting it up if one did reach it. 'And what happens then?' Why, when you have changed sides every stroke of yours has to be a better stroke than the stroke you left alone; if you make a worse stroke the marker calls '*Lost it*' (i.e. you have lost the 'chase,' as it is called, and your opponent scores the point); but if you go on making better strokes till your opponent misses the ball, the marker calls 'Won it' (i.e. you have won the chase, and you score the point).

'But,' you will ask, 'what is a better or a worse stroke or chase?' It is not easy to describe this, but a good stroke or chase might be described as a 'good length stroke;' the nearer the ball pitches to the back-wall at its second bounce the better the chase is, so that, if the second bounce was just close to the *dedans*, it would be a very good stroke, whereas a ball which hit the top of the net and dribbled over would not be a good stroke. Supposing,

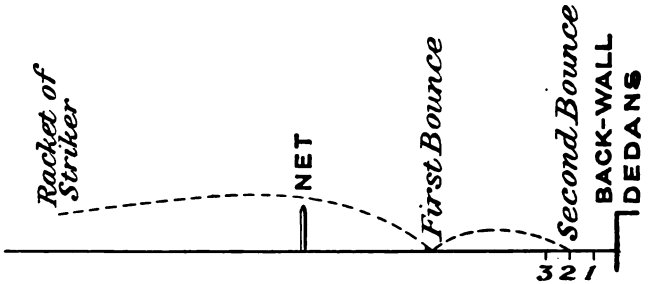


DIAGRAM 3.—THE SECOND BOUNCE OF THE BALL IS TWO YARDS FROM THE BACK-WALL, SO THE CHASE IS CALLED 'CHASE TWO'

for instance, that your opponent hit a ball over the net, and that its second bounce was two yards from the *dedans*-wall; this would be Chase 2. When you changed sides, every stroke of yours would have to be a better length than the stroke you left alone; i.e. it would have to pitch (at its second bounce) less than two yards from the back-wall (see diagram 3). If it pitched more than two yards from the back-wall you would lose your point; if it pitched exactly two yards from the back-wall 'Chase off' would be called, and neither side would score anything. By 'cutting' the ball you make it come down from the back-wall more quickly, and so make a better 'chase.'

'What is the advantage of this?' Why, if you have left a ball alone you have another chance; only you must keep on making better strokes than the stroke you have left alone, or else you lose the chase.

If a ball at its second bounce pitches two yards from the back-

wall 'Chase 2' is called; if a little less than two yards, then 'Better than 2' is called; and if a little more than two yards, then 'Worse than 2' (for here it is not 'the more the better,' but 'the more the worse'); if between two and three yards, then 'Chase 2 and 3;' if a ball is hit into the gallery nearest to you, that will be 'Chase the last gallery;' the gallery next to it is 'the second gallery,' then 'the door,' then 'the first gallery' —the gallery nearest to the 'hole' where the marker stands, nobly risking his life (as ladies sometimes think).

After this begins the other side of the net, which is called the *hazard-side*. Here there are fewer chases, and so there are fewer balls that you can leave alone without losing the strokes; for most of the strokes at the end of the court furthest from you are not like Lawn Tennis strokes, as far as the scoring goes.

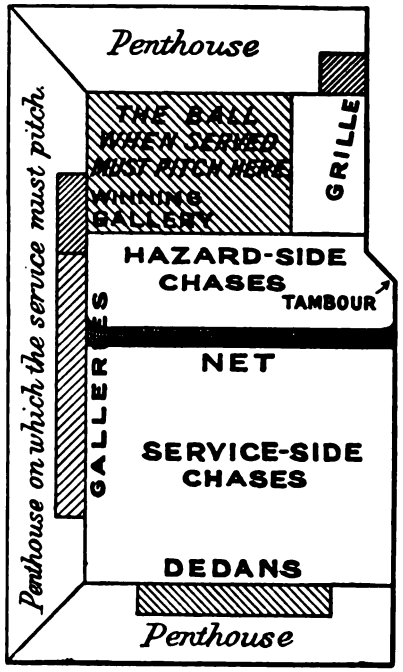


DIAGRAM 4.—GROUND PLAN OF A TENNIS COURT

As to a few of the other differences.

(vi) In Tennis you cannot stand outside the court to take a stroke (because the side-walls are in the way), and.

(vii) There is practically none of that volleying up at the net which has done so much to alter the game of Lawn Tennis lately; for if you came up to the net, your opponent could 'lob' the ball over your head into one of the winning openings.

And now, in conclusion, let us see in what respects Lawn Tennis has the advantage over Tennis, and *vice versâ*.

Lawn Tennis (i) has a far larger number of courts, and (ii) a far larger number of players; (iii) it is in the open air; and (iv) it is not very expensive, though the cheapness of Lawn Tennis under the best conditions has often been exaggerated; for new balls are not to be had for nothing, and good courts are not made in a day or kept in order for nothing.

There are two more features of Lawn Tennis which some people might consider advantages—viz. that (1) it has tournaments, and (2) ladies play it.

I offer no opinion.

Tennis, on the other hand, (i) is independent of wet weather or the season of the year (of course this would also apply to covered court Lawn Tennis, but the number of covered courts in England is sadly small). (ii) It can be kept up till a man is quite old (I think that in proportion there are far more elderly gentlemen playing Tennis than Lawn Tennis); moreover (iii) there is in public and many private courts a marker to play in case you should not be able to get an opponent, or, what is more aggravating still, in case your opponent should not appear. And if your opponent does come, the marker calls out the score, sees to the balls (of which there are many dozens—a great blessing), and mends rackets, &c. (iv) The system of handicapping at Tennis is far more nicely adjusted than at Lawn Tennis; in fact, however different two players may be in their standard of excellence, they can always manage to get an even game by means of odds. Such expressions as 'touch no side-walls,' 'touch no walls,' 'half the court,' to say nothing of the immense number of handicaps like 'half thirty and a bisque,' 'playing with a cricket-bat' (or soda-water bottle, &c.), show what a multitude of methods there are for equalising the standard of play; and, best of all, the loser of six games running in a set has to pay the marker a shilling.

It is needless to say that both Lawn Tennis and Tennis have suffered from the great bi-mania, Bicycling and Golf, and perhaps the daughter has suffered more than the mother from the competition (if we are to judge by the number of courts rather than by the number of tournaments.)

The match for 1,000*l.* a side between the American Pettitt and the English Champion Latham (on October 17 and 19) ended in an unexpectedly easy win for the Englishman, in spite of his adversary's much-dreaded service. The game was of the most modern character, and probably the fastest that has ever been played, though Pettitt seems to have aged considerably since he was last in England.

As showing the differences between taking the service in Tennis and in Lawn Tennis, Latham took almost all Pettitt's services by hitting them, not straight over the net, but up against the side-wall; in Lawn Tennis none of these strokes would have gone near the net, they would perhaps have gone into the net of a court two or three doors off.

STORY OF A GERMAN TROUT-RIVER

BY J. H. LEECH

THE earliest record of the Ilm fishery is that it was let to a professional fisherman for 4*l.* 10*s.* per annum. He was allowed to use the title of Court Fisherman, on the understanding that he first offered his trout for sale to the Palace kitchens.

I believe that the water remained in the hands of professionals until 1871, although many sportsmen had been in the habit of fishing it with the fly—John Horrocks, for example. Lieutenant-Colonel Freiherr von und zu Egloffstein rented the river in 1871, on his return from the Franco-Prussian war; he paid a rent of 15*l.* for about eighteen miles of water, caught 7½ cwt. of trout in three years, and stocked the river with 6,000 fry annually. He first learnt to throw a fly from a Dutchman called De Borr, who had fished for salmon in Norway and Sweden; he arrived in Weimar in 1861, and was very successful in spite of his ponderous tackle. Egloffstein now got a rod (one of Farlow's) and tackle from the well-known firm of Hildebrand, of Munich, and started fishing in earnest. One day he was unfortunate enough to lose his fly book when fish were taking well. This started him making his own flies. His first attempts were at red and black palmers, and were so successful that he has made his own flies ever since, and either for wet or dry fly fishing they would not shame a professional tier.

In 1874 John Horrocks, the author of that useful work in German entitled 'The Art of Fly Fishing for Trout and Grayling in Germany and Austria,' took the water from Mellingen to

Tiefurt, about fourteen miles. An interesting article on John Horrocks, by his son, appeared in the 'Fishing Gazette' of September 18, 1897. It states that between 1840 and 1850 he frequently landed from 400 to 500 good trout in the season, and that 'formerly he could kill in a season at least twenty-five brace of trout from 2 lbs. to 5 lbs., but that at the time of writing (1873) he was content if he got a dozen big fish.' He mentions 16½ brace of trout, weighing over 40 lbs., caught by three rods in four hours, as a record for 1873. These results are meagre compared to what the river now produces, and the improvement

TIEFURT WATER

is very likely a good deal due to the careful way in which Horrocks nursed the water. He probably turned down fry, but I have no particulars.

Alexander Sperber, a wealthy landed proprietor and a pupil of John Horrocks, took over the river at the latter's death in 1881. He was celebrated for his skill in switching, shooting a yard or two of line at exactly the right moment to carry the fly under overhanging bushes to rising fish, absolutely inaccessible by any other method. He was not in the habit of fishing for more than a few hours at a time, but some marvellous catches

are put to his credit. One great reason of Sperber's success was that he took the trouble to conciliate the riparian tenants by giving them an occasional dinner or supper, with unlimited beer and cigars, cheap commodities in Germany, but they go a long way. Although there is a right of way along the banks included in the lease of the river, yet the owners naturally object to having their hay trampled down, and, as they can retaliate by refusing to allow any bushes on the banks to be cut, it is not only fair but politic to treat them well, and it doubtless reduces the amount of poaching. Sperber established a hatchery, from which he turned down a large number of fry; these consisted of different sorts of trout from various localities, and were put into tributary brooks and streams as well as into the main river. During Sperber's tenancy the river seems to have improved enormously, in spite of a certain amount of netting and retaining small fish of ½ lb. The following is a list of trout sold to the fish dealers, and does not include what were kept for personal use, or presents, which were very numerous:—

Year	Number of Trout Sold	Weight of Fish	Number of Fry turned down
		lbs.	
1881	1,610	1,542	42,000
1882	1,709	1,856	25,000
1883	2,044	2,176	25,000
1884	Records lost	—	25,000
1885	1,911	1,920	30,000
1886	1,933	2,092	34,000
1887	Uncertain	2,200	30,000

In 1880, or thereabouts, Sperber decided to wage war on the otters, which were very numerous, so he asked Mr. L. Horrocks to get him a couple of good otter hounds in England. Two were procured from a Devonshire pack; they were called Glancer and Governess, and are said to have cost 100*l.*, and up to March 15, 1884, no fewer than eighty-five otters were brought to bag by means of this couple. Governess killed all her pups, so in April 1884 Sperber came over to England to buy more hounds; he got seven from the neighbourhood of Windermere, and a couple, named Hector and Beauty, from a Scotch pack. Up to 1887 183 otters were killed, but some of these were on neighbouring rivers. Beside the premium of 1*l.* for every otter killed the Government allowed a substantial reduction in railway fares. These hounds won many prizes at dog shows in different parts of Germany. In all thirty-three of the pups were kept; a pack

of seven, of different ages, was sold to the late Crown Prince Rudolph of Austria, and a similar lot to a Hungarian nobleman, Count Mungkaczky, and both packs are said to have given great satisfaction. At Sperber's death, in 1888, the pack was broken up; the bitches were all killed; nine two-year-old hounds were given to millers and Government foresters, and are known to have accounted for seventeen otters up to the end of 1892, for which Government premiums were paid.

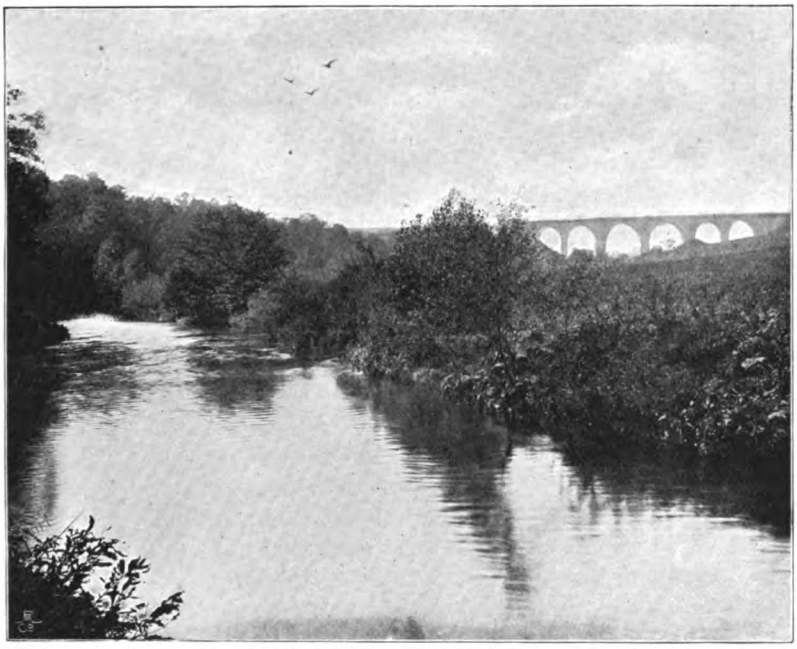
Egloffstein kept the original Glancer and three others, with which he killed eleven otters on his estates in Bavaria; the remainder were sold or given away, and some of these were used as sheep dogs. Sperber's hounds afforded sport to many, and their exploits are still a favourite subject of conversation at the river-side inns. So well was their work done that hardly an otter has survived in the Weimar neighbourhood. In September 1887 Egloffstein again rented the water, with Mr. Arthur Horrocks as a partner until 1890, when he had it in his own hands until 1894. During this time about 18,000 fry were turned out yearly.

In July 1892 a calamity overtook the lower water at Weimar. It was during the celebrated heat wave, when the water was down to about one-third of its proper volume, that a cholera scare got started, and the authorities had the streets and surface drains washed down with lime and carbolic. This found its way into the river at the viaduct below the town, and killed all the fish down to Tiefurt, the best part of the water. In all some 50,000 lbs. of trout are said to have been killed; of these about 17 cwt. were bought by natives, packed in baskets, and sent off to Jena, where there was a Bismarck festival going on, and a menagerie that happened to be at Weimar took 4 cwt. to feed the beasts. An attempt was made to transport fish still living to the unpolluted water above, but was of no avail, as they could not stand the moving.

In 1894 Egloffstein was joined by Mr. Stern, of Berlin, John Day, and myself. In 1896 John Day died, and in 1897 Egloffstein retired from the partnership. The central part of the water, from the Stern bridge, in the town, to the weir at Taubach, is now sublet to the landlord of the Hotel Erbprinz, who allows visitors to fish at a low price. Since 1890 from 15,000 to 25,000 fry have been turned down yearly.

To anyone experienced in stocking a river it will be obvious that turning down fry is not as efficient a method as putting in a far smaller percentage of yearlings or two-year-olds, but it is the

system enforced by the Government. It must be remembered that in Germany fishing is only regarded as a sport by a very small minority. Owing to the difficulty of getting fairly fresh sea-fish in most parts of the country, trout have a very high value, from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.* per pound and more. The rivers are let to professionals, who catch trout by all possible means and have to live on their profits. So the Government make the occupier turn down about 1,000 fry per annum for every mile of water, in order to prevent extermination. If this is not sufficient in the



SHALLOW BELOW VIADUCT, TIEFURT WATER

case of professionals, it is amply so for sportsmen, who also limit the size of fish retained. The principle adopted at Weimar has always been to buy ova from different hatcheries all over Germany, besides those taken from the native trout.

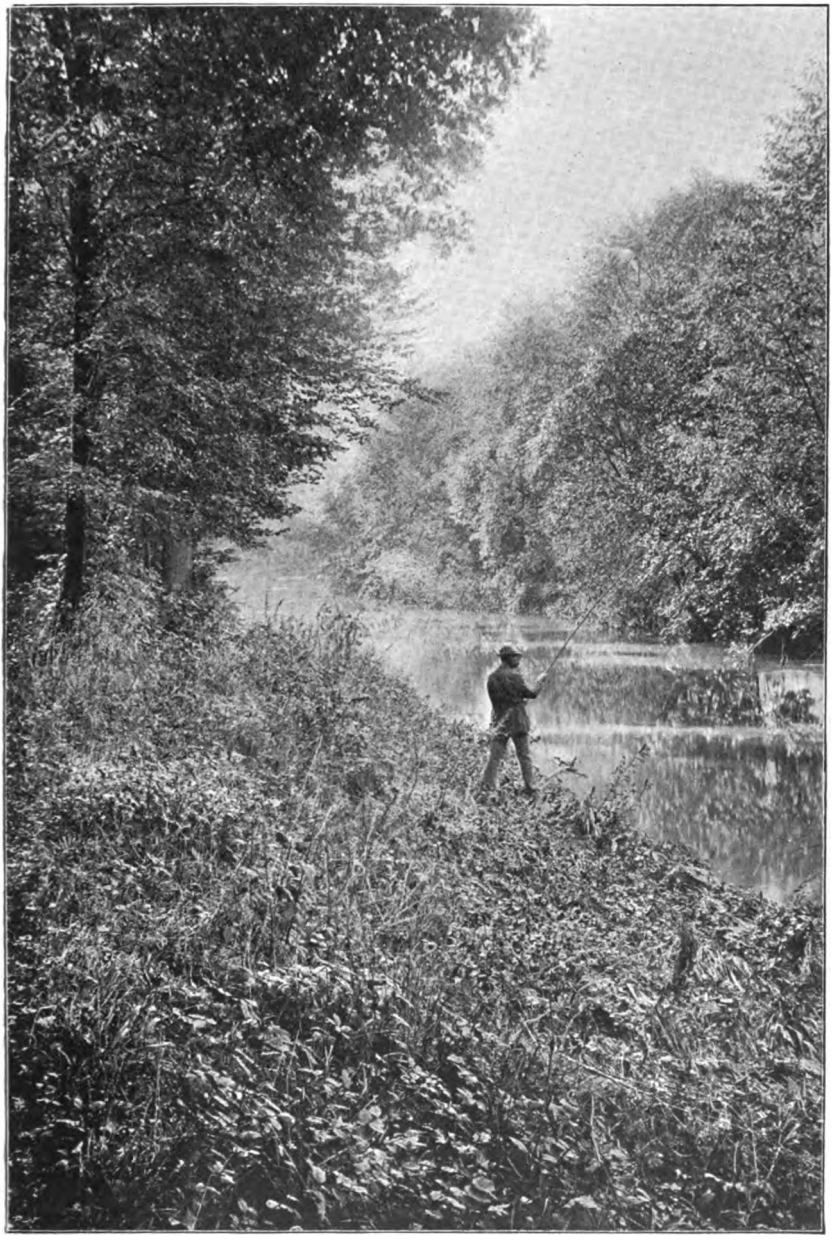
The most successful introduction seem to be the lake trout from the Starnberger See, in Bavaria. They are, however, only found below the town weir and in the neighbourhood of deep water. They are easily distinguished from the local trout, as they are bright silvery fish with very black spots on the back, no red spots, and a pure white belly ; they are also shorter and deeper in propor-

tion. I am sure these fish would be good to turn down in English rivers where there is plenty of still deep water between the shallows. Rainbow trout have been turned down from time to time, and what few I have met with were all below the town weir. They fought far more strongly than ordinary trout of the same size, and had a knack of getting broadside on, thus utilising the full force of the current, and shaking their heads at the same time. They also jump a great deal. I certainly intend to turn out more. My best weighed 5¼ lbs., and he took me all my time to land with a ten-foot rod, against a heavy stream in a place where I could not move and get below him. Salmon fry have often been introduced in large numbers, but without result, owing to obstructions in the river. One year a few fish managed to get up, when a weir was being rebuilt, and several were either caught in the mills or shot. Saibling, or char, have been tried, and a few caught, one of over seven pounds. There are records of fish of over ten pounds being caught with the fly, but I have never seen anything approaching that weight taken myself, except in netting parts of the river in the town not accessible to a rod.

The beautiful old city of Weimar needs no description; few places have better escaped the hands of the modern German builder, with his so-called 'Renaissance' in stucco. Of course the influence of Goethe and Schiller reigns supreme. It is not everywhere that after a good day's fishing and an excellent French dinner you can attend a first-rate Opera at a nominal price.

The Ilm rises high in the Thuringian forest, and flows through broad meadows bordered by wooded hills. It affords every variety of water, as it is intersected by mills every few miles; in some places you can flog the water up or down as you would a Scotch or North-country stream, while in others the highest art of the dry fly is essential. I remember John Day fishing the water below the town weir, with trout rising well, and he tried a good many different sorts of duns before he got the exact shade, but when he found it the fish suffered.

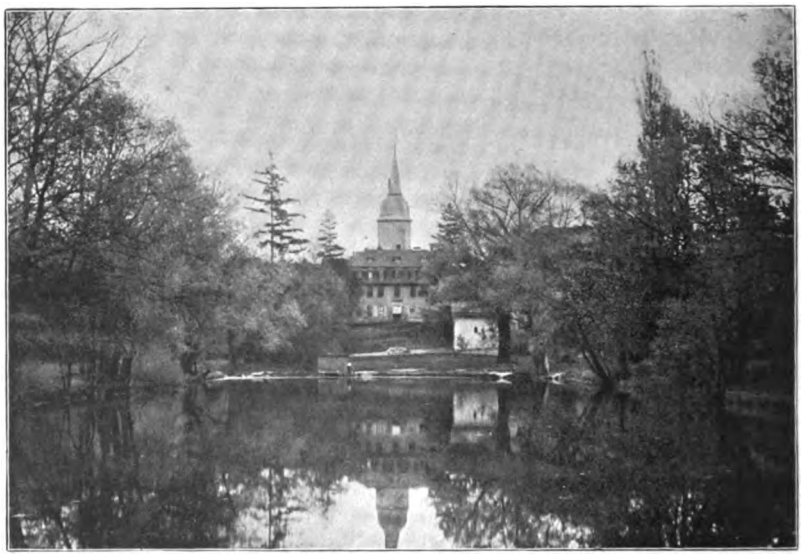
Although I had caught trout with the fly since early boyhood, not only in England and Scotland, but also in France, Germany, Switzerland, and the Tyrol, I knew practically nothing of dry fly fishing, a couple of flies fished up stream answering well enough on the rivers I had been accustomed to. However on joining the Houghton Club, during the last year of its existence, I first was made aware of the state of perfection to which fly fishing can be brought, and the extreme shyness of which trout are capable. It took me some time to realise that on the Test, the most



TIEFURT WATER—ANOTHER VIEW

celebrated of English trout rivers, anything like a big bag was an exceedingly rare occurrence, and that one ought to be satisfied

with a brace of 1½-lb. trout. Although the charm of Test fishing is supposed to lie in the skill required to get the better of such highly educated fish, I have never come across the man who did not look forward to the times of the grannom and the May fly, when the trout are supposed to be less wary. A season spent with such companions as Marryatt, Halford, and John Day, always ready to coach a novice, and help him with their valuable experience, was indeed a liberal education, but the Test left a void; never again would there be the same satisfaction in a 20-lb. basket after a hard day's flogging, and the alternative offered was



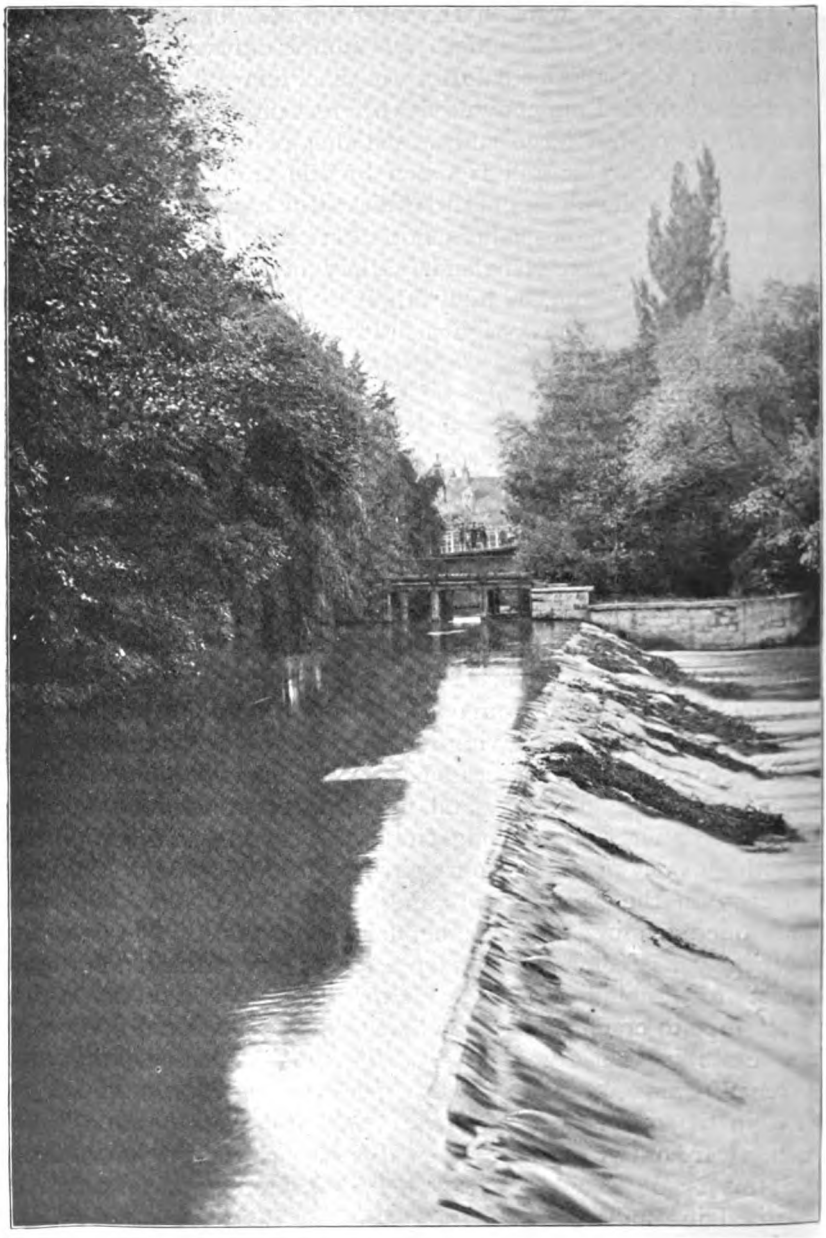
POND IN FRÄULEIN FRORIEGIS' GARDEN

loafing, yarning, an excessive contemplation of nature, endless waiting for a rise of fly that wouldn't come, and the chance of two or three brace of medium-sized fish if all went well. One of the greatest charms of trout fishing undoubtedly is that it leads one where Nature is at her very best, but the sight of a kingfisher or the gambols of a water rat are not sufficient to compensate every one for a blank day.

During this unsatisfactory state of things I became acquainted with the Ilm. Here was a river that seemed to be all that a reasonable man could expect, and John Day and I wasted no time in giving it a good try. The Ilm seems to fish equally well throughout the season, but the lower and brighter it is the better.

There is very little weed in the river, but the banks are much overgrown with trees and bushes, which I am sure are a great advantage; they afford shade for the fish, and a background to the angler, which I am convinced is of great importance. Besides this they supply a large and varied diet of insect food, which falls into the water and is eaten by the trout, as shown by autopsies. If the bushes get too thick, it is easy enough to have some cut away, and this does not interfere with the fishing, as weed-cutting does in England. Many of the shallows afford perfect dry fly fishing, notably those at the top of the park, where I once took ninety-eight fish from 1 lb. to 3½ lbs. in three days in August 1896.

At Weimar there is a class of fishing different from anything I have come across anywhere else. For reasons I have not been able to discover, the fish are quite easy to see in the still, or moderately still, water, by those accustomed to look for them. This may be owing to conditions of the light and water, the shadows of the trees, and in some places from looking down off fairly high banks. There are regular feeding-places, which change from year to year and according to the height of the river; these are, no doubt, regulated by the direction of the stream, and with a little experience one knows where to expect a fish. When a trout is caught from one of these spots he is usually soon replaced by another. Having found a fish, the next thing is to get a fly to him. In most cases he will be lying in rather shallow water on the opposite side, and more or less under a bush, and the fisherman standing among trees and bushes. Sufficient line must be let out to cover the required distance, drawn in slowly, and cast off the water. Switching takes a lot of learning, but when once acquired a fly can be placed as accurately, as lightly, and nearly as far as in ordinary casting; and there is a way, almost impossible to describe, of drying the fly (it is, so to speak, an attempt to crack it off) which answers as well as half a dozen false casts in the ordinary way. Egloffstein, who is the best switcher I know, never casts any other way, even when standing quite in the open. In order to get well under an overhanging bush, a yard or two of line must be shot at exactly the right time; and this is no easy matter. I believe switching is very little practised in England, but it is the only way of getting at fish in overgrown places. I made a fairly satisfactory catch in Yorkshire, a few years ago, in a place which was always left alone on account of the trees, and the fish were naturally quite unsophisticated.



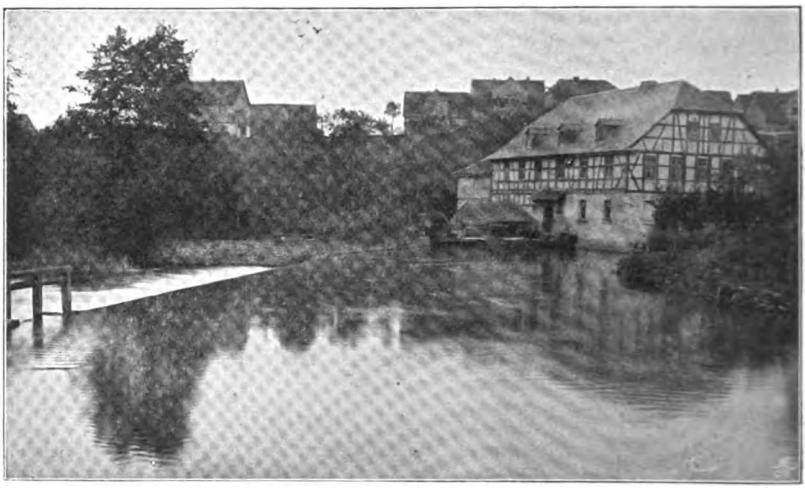
TOWN WEIR, WEIMAR.

We will suppose the switch to be successful, and the fly dropped a couple of feet above the fish, so as to drift over him.

If he takes it floating, it is all plain sailing, and he can be struck in the ordinary way when the fly disappears like the roach-fisher's float; but if he prefers it sunk, as is often the case, it is another matter. These trout generally take very slowly, often following the fly for some distance, and you must see the fish shut his mouth on the fly before striking, which should be a steady drag and not a sharp jerk, which has little or no effect on a slack line in stillish water, such as one has often to deal with. A short-sighted man is at a great disadvantage, as a fish can take and eject his fly without him knowing anything about it. He needs some one to tell him when to strike, and this seems to answer pretty well; he also requires a sharp-sighted gillie to point him out fish he would otherwise pass over. These stationary fish in the feeding-places are locally known as stand fish, and it is the exception for one not to take a fly if properly presented. Another sort of fish is the 'cruiser.' He is a most interesting quarry, and has a regular beat of, say, thirty or forty yards, which he slowly patrols backwards and forwards under the bushes. He must be carefully watched, and a fly dropped in some convenient opening between the branches opposite just as he happens to pass; there is only time for one cast, so it must be made with the greatest accuracy. The excitement is kept up, as sometimes the fish will alter his course a little and keep quite out of reach, or, on the other hand, there may be two or more cruisers working the same beat, and each varying the course a little. Day was wonderfully successful at this sort of fishing, and his favourite spot was the Taubach millhead, fairly open on one side and a tangled mass of willows and alders on the other. Wading is quite unnecessary for this fishing, and there are no swampy water meadows at Weimar. For some two miles the river winds through the beautiful park, and there is some of the best of the water.

Another way is to put on waders, and fish a stretch of water up just as it comes, using the fly dry where it will float and a fish or a rise is seen, and fishing the water thoroughly in the rapid places, the fly being drowned by the stream, as would a natural insect. A large number of small fish get caught by this means, and these have been useful to turn down in the lower water, which was depopulated by the pollution of 1892. Since that time it had never been thought worth while to fish it until last year, when the gillie told me one day in April that it was full of big fish. I went down rather sceptical, but returned with fifteen fish, weighing over 38 lbs., the best 4½ lbs. After this I fished the

water six or seven times more during the season, twice again getting fifteen fish, and once fourteen, weighing 42 lbs.; the best fish was 5¼ lbs., and there were six more between 4 lbs. and 5 lbs.; the average was spoilt by keeping some smallish fish, and in future a 3-lb. limit should be kept to. These bags should satisfy most people, but are nothing to what Sperber is said to have made in the days before the pollution. Last year this water was so overgrown that only about one-fifth of it could be fished, and this only made an afternoon's fishing for one rod; but I hear that this year a lot of clearing has been done, and the result ought to be satisfactory.



OLD MILL, TAUBACH

With the exception of one day, when I enjoyed the best bit of dry fly fishing I ever had, the water was too high and thick; the only thing to be done was to fish the water down with sea-trout, or small salmon fly, thus reducing the sport to the level of grilse or sea-trout fishing; but it was that or nothing without descending a step lower and trying a Devon minnow or a worm. The condition of the fish shows that the food supply must be wonderfully good, and on a ten-foot rod they take a lot of killing in the heavy water. Plenty of sport can generally be got without making a labour of a pleasure, so we usually go out two together, taking the fish alternately. Watching another man trying for a trout in a difficult place is often as good as fishing oneself. Carriage hire is cheap, and, as the road is never far from the river, it is

very convenient for getting about and disposing of one's coats and other paraphernalia.

As no fishing yarn appears to be complete without a description of the lunch, I must add that the village inns are clean, and have nice gardens with summer-houses, and there are worse things than sitting in the shade discussing a fresh-caught trout and a cutlet, washed down by such beer as England does not know. The great drawback of the Ilm, in common with many other rivers, is that it gets thick after heavy rains, and often takes some days to clear. It is annoying to find dirty water, after a long journey and with only a limited time at one's disposal. The only way out of the difficulty was to find another river, within easy reach, that kept clean; so I set to work and found a brighter, a pleasanter, and in many ways a better stream, as an alternative, but 'that is another story.'

Weimar in August, 1898.

Very little fishing was done this year until August 15, when the lower water was found to be in excellent order for the dry fly, and so it continued. Owing to the exceptional heat that prevailed, there was little done until evening, when the fish usually rose well at something almost invisible, but were very particular about artificial flies. A certain number of fish were caught on the shallows with a sea-trout fly fished down stream; among these were nine Rainbow trout. The largest weighed 7 lbs. 5 ozs. after being kept alive in the fish-box for 45 hours; it measured 25 in. by 14½. It had it all its own way on my ten-foot rod for a time. Two others weighed 5 lbs. 10 ozs. each, and the smallest was over 2½ lbs. A good many of the brown trout weighed from 4 lbs. to 5¼ lbs. Fish must grow at a great rate in this lower water, which is only about 1½ mile in extent, and was poisoned in July, 1892. It produced 132 trout, averaging a good 3 lbs. each, in 16 days.

FINNER WHALE FISHING

BY CUTCLIFFE HYNE

We were lolling down the northern coast of the Varanger in a small coaster which rolled in the trough of a lusty swell, and periodically we called in at some small bleak dreary harbour, where drying nets formed a festoon fence before the houses, and drying cod on their wooden racks, and masses of grey inhospitable stone blocked in the background. Then when we had negotiated all our ports of call the helm was starboarded, and we stood out across the broad waters of the fjord towards the gleaming snow mountains which hedged in the country of the Lapps thirty miles away on the other side.

Fishers we passed on the way; Russians with long hair and Tartar faces, clumsy high-booted Finns, and queer-garbed Lapps, swinging over the swells in their viking boats, toiling at their miles of long lines. And then a rain squall drove down, blotting out the view, and we cowered under the green canvas dodger in front of the wheel on the little coaster's spar deck, and shivered at the chill.

But, presently, out of the greyness of the rain squall there came an old familiar scent, and the mate at the wheel pulled lustily at the syren string to advertise our whereabouts. An answering hoot came back, and then through the mist a small green-painted steamer of some thirty tons burden loomed

out, slowly bearing down upon us. Her pace was almost imperceptible, but a cumbersome harpoon shell gun on her stem-head gave us the necessary hint as to her occupation, and presently we could make out two towing hawsers astern of her, and a dead bloated finner whale made fast tail foremost to each.

The fish were blown up like balloons with decomposition, and like balloons they were striped with longitudinal gores. Their jaws were just awash, and oil oozed from them in a slimy fan. The smell of them was almost past endurance. The little green whaler had killed, perhaps, three hundred miles away, and was towing her catch back to the home factory for realisation. And a valuable catch it was too. The big black bull was worth all of 250*l.*; and although the cow whale, which showed her ivory-white belly, was smaller, she would probably fetch her 200*l.* with bone at its then enormous price.

This fishing of the blue finned whale—or, as he is more technically named, the finner—is an industry of comparatively modern birth, and has its centre in these bleak northern seas. The right whale and the sperm whale have been hunted, for how many centuries I do not know; the mist of ages has closed over the first capture, and not many more years will pass before the last score is nicked in the tally. The right whales have been chased almost entirely from the face of known waters; they are searched for from Davis Straits to the Kara Sea; ships have looked for them amongst the tabular bergs of the Antarctic, but the fishery is on its last legs. Even with bone at 40*l.* a ton the Nantucket and the Peterhead owners are dropping out of what they consider a dying business. This newer fishery has, however, increased by such leaps and bounds that in 1894 the kill amounted to 1,500 head. And all the credit is due to a Norwegian skipper, one Svend Foyn.

The finner is no stranger in the North. Whalers of all countries have seen him spout and gambol for three hundred years, and have cursed him with maritime point and fluency. Occasionally some harpooner, disbelieving tradition, made fast to a finner, and experienced that sensation which the *vaquero* found when he lassoed the Mexican State Express. And as fishing implements developed, they shot at him with harpoon guns, and riddled him with explosive lances. But the end was always the same; it was either 'cut' or 'swamp,' and there was another white-painted whale boat losing way over the swells, with a white-faced crew, no harpoon, and an empty tub of line.

Until 1865 the finner whale defied the fishermen of the

world, but in that year Captain Svend Foyn went North with new ideas for conquering the brute's prodigious vitality; and though he did not succeed at first, though, indeed, he was constantly at shoulder-touch with sudden death, he figured out the right scheme at last, and then reaped a harvest well earned. He died, only a year or two back, the richest man in Norway.

Captain Svend Foyn went into this matter in middle life and already rich. He had two objects in view. In the first instance he wished to be successful where all the world had failed, and conquer the only animal remaining which man had not subdued. And in the second place he was desirous of making money. He was a man ignorant of science; he was quite uneducated beyond the narrow lines of his own craft; but he was full of wooden-headed pluck, and possessed of a mule's determination.

He started in the right way. He discarded the slow, clumsy, single-topsail, wooden barque, with auxiliary steam, and her fleet of carvel-built rowing-boats, and set off in a steamer of fifty tons, which would tow in the wake of a harpooned finner without breaking the line. He believed that this would not only tire out the whale with quickness, but would also prevent the carcase from sinking to the bottom when life had gone, after its usual fashion.

Captain Svend Foyn's first experiences must have been exciting. He was frequently towed by some maddened fish at a twenty-knot rate through a heavy sea, with his fore-deck smothered with water up to the bridge. On these occasions the engines would be rung to 'full astern,' and the little steamer would hang on in tow for twelve hours at a stretch; and to the jaded sportsman, in search of a new sensation, this method of hunting may be recommended with confidence. But the conclusion was always the same: either Captain Foyn was forced to cut, or the harpoon drew, or the finner died and sank; at any rate, he never gathered his game.

Time after time his harpoons made fast, and ninety tons of agonised living flesh plucked the little steamer, like a dragging child, across those desolate plains of ocean. Years came and the years went, each dull with disappointment. But yet he did not give in. He mounted artillery, and bombarded the finner with heavy shot, and still without effect; he tried plot after plan, and plan after plot; he expended 20,000*l.* and human limbs in his experiments; and finally, out of all the failures he evolved success. He mounted on the stem-head of his steamer a stunted heavy-breached gun, which carried an explosive bomb

with a huge harpoon, weighing together over eighty English pounds. The idea of playing the finner like a trout was abandoned once and for all. The explosion of the bomb shot it dead; its huge vitality was snapped in a second; and a three-inch warp made fast to the harpoon kept it from sinking, where a thinner whale line would have been snapped.

The strongest fish that swam in all the seas was beaten, and Captain Svend Foyn patented his tactics, and took off his oil-skins. Then the business part of him came in, and, until his monopoly ceased, his launches were catching a hundred finners a year, which may be valued at 250*l.* apiece.

The fishery has spread since that monopoly granted by law has run out, and other people are permitted now to profit by the schemes evolved from Captain Svend Foyn's brain. In the fjords and bays which lie round that grim coast to eastwards of the North Cape, in Iceland, and even up some of the snug inlets of the Varanger Fjord, are numberless stations where the little steamers can bring their catch for caldrons and axes to resolve into its commercial elements. The finner soon swells after he is dead, and lies on the water like a half-submerged balloon, striped, too, balloon fashion, with gore like seams. The tail flukes are cut adrift, and he is towed ignominiously stern first, with a wake of oil fanning out from his jaws, and a smell which grows with the days, and beats down the crisp sea air. But when the finner is beached, and the axes and spades strip off the blubber from the pink beef below, and cut away the whale-bone from the head, then there arises a stink which poisons heaven. Still, custom is everything. The workers toil at the trying-out the oil, at resolving the carcass into manure, and tinned meats, and cow-fodder, and at packing the precious bone, and it never strikes them that a smell is abroad which is almost palpable in its solidness. But use is everything in tackling these sort of scents. We were beginning to find that out for ourselves.

MY DEAR GAZELLE

BY MRS. HERBERT VIVIAN

ONE of the most charming sights to my mind in the courtyard of a harem is the graceful and affectionate gazelle which greets a visitor with its soft, dark eye; and I had not been long in Tunisia before I made up my mind to bring back one of these dear little creatures with me to England as a memento of my visit. In Tunis itself a gazelle is by no means easy to obtain, for it has to be brought a long way from the South of the Regency, and does not always stand the rough and ready means of transport. The Consul-General, Sir Harry Johnston, told me he had a consignment sent him on camel-back from the interior, but that they suffered so much from sea—or rather camel—sickness, and had their legs so badly injured, that he was obliged to destroy them. I think the first gazelle I saw in Africa was a dead one in the Bey's menagerie. It was a pitiful sight, stretched out cold and stark upon the gravel walk with blood-stained sockets; a lady of the harem had had the limpid blue eyes cut out that she might swallow them, and acquire some of their beauty, in accordance with an Arab superstition.

When I came to Gabes I was delighted to find a couple of gazelles gambolling in the courtyard of the little inn, and I soon made friends with them, though they never acquired anything like the tameness which my own gazelle has developed in England. One of them was a female about a year old, with long, curved horns, and the other a male of about three months, with horns which had not yet grown longer than an inch. The male was the tamer of the two, but neither of them had much con-

fidence in strangers on first acquaintance. They seemed devoted to the landlady, who had brought them up from infancy, and condescended to tolerate a negro servant, chiefly, I fancy, on account of the excellent accent with which he imitated their bleat. They were allowed to run about the streets whenever they liked, but they never strayed very far, lest the Arab boys should be tempted to tease them. Their chief occupation was to bask in the sunshine of the courtyard, or nibble at a great bunch of Lucerne grass hung up for their benefit, or wander into the guests' bedrooms and play with anything that took their fancy there. Nothing could exceed their mischief, and the landlady told me that one of them had bitten a huge hole in a sheet which she had hung up to air. One morning, when I was dressing, the younger gazelle stole in and carried off one of my most necessary garments into the courtyard. He stood behind a pillar with it in its mouth, surveying me with the most mischievous expression and dodging me behind the pillars, to the intense amusement of the negro when I attempted a pursuit. The landlady was devoted to animals, and, I think, exaggerated the tameness of her gazelles, though they certainly were very fond of her. I remember one evening she had been feeding them, and putting her fingers into their mouths to play with them. 'Look,' she remarked, 'how gentle they are, they would never dream of biting me.' She had scarcely said this when she gave a loud squeal, and drew away a finger from which the blood was streaming copiously. I could not help laughing, although she had evidently been bitten severely. 'Poor little fellow!' she said, as she shook the blood in great drops upon the floor; 'it was all my own fault; for, of course, he thought I was giving him something to eat.' The animals evidently possessed such a keen sense of humour, and their practical jokes were always so witty, that I entreated the landlady to procure me a gazelle as soon as possible. She expressed her doubts about my being able to get it home safely to England, and to keep it alive in our arctic climate, but she mentioned that she had obtained a pair some years previously for a German, and that it had thriven exceedingly in his deer park. Indeed, he had written to her recently to announce with great delight that they had just presented him with the dearest and fluffiest little gazelle imaginable, and that he hoped in process of time to possess quite a colony.

Several days elapsed without my seeing my promised gazelle, and when the landlady told me that it could only be obtained by a piece of good fortune, if an Arab happened to have killed a

mother to sell her flesh in the market and her little ones as pets. I began to fear that no gazelle would turn up before the time arrived for my departure from the oasis. However, one morning the woman summoned me in a great state of excitement, to say that she had found an Arab leading a young gazelle through the street, and had instantly waylaid him on my account. I hurried out into the courtyard, and found the sweetest and most miserable little object I ever beheld. It seemed to consist of nothing but skin and bone, and its long spindle legs, covered with terrible sores where they had been tied together, would have given it a laughable aspect if one had not felt so sorry for it. It was held by a coarse rope round its neck, and cowered away from everybody, trembling with fear. But even then, its blue-black eyes were exceedingly beautiful, and it had an exquisitely impertinent expression about its little snub nose. I wanted to take possession of it at once, and thought half a crown dirt cheap; but the landlady had her own ideas about the etiquette of purchase in the East, and insisted on haggling for a long time, to the eventual saving of threepence. The poor little fellow was evidently half-starved, but it took several days before we could accustom him to take warm goat's milk out of a baby's bottle. He was, however, by no means stupid in learning what was expected of him, and soon developed into the most charming little round ball of fluff, perched at the top of four ridiculous stilts with glossy patent leather shoes at the end of them. The other gazelles viewed him with decided suspicion, and butted him away whenever he was inclined to make any advance to them, so he soon came to look upon me as his one friend and natural protector.

AGED 4 WEEKS

I expected that he would prove a great trial on the long journey back to England, but he turned out exceeding docile and accommodating. Happily the captain and stewards on board the boats took a great fancy to him, and spared no trouble about sending ashore to fetch his daily half-litre of goat's milk. When it was smooth, he used to frolic about the saloon and deck with exuberance, but he was always ready to be packed away again in his hamper, and sleep profoundly at a moment's notice. Off the coast of Sicily I had some alarm about him, as I had been unable to obtain fresh milk, and had been beguiled by his piteous appeals

into giving him a dose of condensed milk, which disagreed with him at once. By this time I had grown so fond of him and his pretty little ways that I could not bear the thought of losing him. However, after several bottlefuls of real milk he rapidly recovered. I had been told that he would probably prove a very bad sailor, but this turned out to be quite a mistake. When the sea was roughest, and I was feeling most anxious to remain undisturbed, he would poke his nose into my hand and jump about, expecting me to join him in a game of play. From Naples, where he proved far and away the most popular person in my hotel, I travelled straight through to England solely on his account, and he accommodated himself to the railway as easily as he had done to the steamer. As the officials were quite unaccustomed to a gazelle as a passenger, they were puzzled to know how he ought to be treated. In one case only, for the first stretch in Italy—and that chiefly, I think, on account of the officiousness of my hotel porter—I had to take a ticket for the gazelle. The rest of the way he was as free as an infant in arms, and I may add a great deal less troublesome. Never was there so patient an animal. If he had to go without food for a long time, or to be stuffed into his basket when he would have liked to play or take the air, he never emitted more than the feeblest little bleat of protest. The man who made out his ticket had no idea what he was. Dogs he knew, and goats he knew, but what was this?

AGED 4½ MONTHS

'A gazelle,' I said.

'What is that—is it a monkey or a parrot?'

It is astonishing what a number of animals he has been mistaken for in the course of his career. A man at Rome was heard explaining to another that he was a kangaroo, and in France every one was quite certain that he was a *biche*. But perhaps his strangest experience was when he landed in England, and I had to pass him off as a strawberry. The English Custom-house people were the only officials who made any objection to him

anywhere during his journey. I had scarcely come off the boat, when an individual came up and asked me whether I had a licence to import a gazelle.

I said, 'Licence? no; why should I want a licence? it isn't a dog.'

'But there is a rule that no ruminating animal may be imported without a special permit from the Board of Agriculture. You will have to telegraph for a permit, and leave him here until you get it. We will take every care of him.'

If I had had proper presence of mind, I should have asked the man how he knew for certain that a gazelle was a ruminating animal, but he might have opened the basket to see, and I am sure the little rascal would have been contrary enough to seize that very moment for an exhibition of his powers of ruminating. As it was, I could only plead and implore. It would surely die. It would not take its bottle from anybody but me. Would the Custom-house not have pity upon a poor orphan? The Custom-house was decidedly inclined to do so, but unfortunately regretted that the regulations were absolute, and it was as much as any one's place was worth to infringe them. At last a happy thought occurred to me, and I said, 'How do you know it is a gazelle? You have not seen it.'

'No, but somebody here must have done so;' and the man looked round inquiringly to his colleagues, who confessed that none of them had seen it.

'So,' I said triumphantly, 'if I tell you it is a basket of strawberries, you will let me through?'

'Well,' said the man with a grin, 'if you can tell me that it is a basket of strawberries—I shall have no choice but to let you take it away.'

'All right then, I tell you he is a basket of strawberries,' I said in great delight, snatching him up as a brand from the burning. As I passed the official at the door of the Custom-house he said to me, with a twinkle in his eye, 'Lor! I don't believe that ain't no basket of strorberries, I believe it's a monkey.'

The gazelle spent its first English fortnight at Brighton, soon growing so plump and well-looking that no one who had seen him on his first appearance, with a rope round his neck could ever have recognised him for the same animal, and I soon grew tired of the wealth of laudatory adjectives with which every one assailed him. I took him every day into the square gardens, where a dense mob of cabmen, errand boys, and all sorts of loafers congregated round the railings to admire his jumps,

delicacy, but that is not often allowed him lest he should develop an attack of phossy jaw. He likes fruit of nearly every kind, and would be delightfully destructive in a garden. If I give him a cherry, he proceeds to play at the bobbing game before eating it. He takes the end of the stalk in his mouth and draws the fruit up with great patience in the most comical manner, and has never yet been caught cheating. Strawberry stalks and stewed fruit, with a great deal of sugar, are always welcome to him; but he is generally ready to eat up a whole spoonful of salt, which he finds useful as an appetiser. For some days he raved about lump

EATING CRUSHED OATS

sugar, and would do almost anything to obtain it; but now he has taken a sudden distaste to it, and turns away with a sniff when it is offered. He has much curiosity about new forms of food, and when I am at breakfast he thinks it a great joke to creep up suddenly behind me and stuff his nose into my plate or both forelegs into my teacup. If there is a great upset he is vastly amused, and trots about the room with his head in the air, convinced that he has done something exceedingly clever. He never neglects an opportunity of gnawing a piece of paper. If it is very thin, it soon disappears down his throat, but if it is thick, he only plays with it as a dog with a bone. More than once I have left a pile of letters within his reach, and when I have returned he has greeted me with every possible expression of

merriment, whereupon I have found several of the letters reduced to a pulp.

If he is dull he can always occupy himself with a newspaper. When the cover is not to his taste he tears it off; then he turns over the pages and sniffs them just as if he were engaged in mastering their contents. I regret to say that he has a decided preference for light literature, such as the 'Sporting Times' and the theatrical columns of the 'Sketch.' This accounts for the fact that he always thinks in the very latest slang, as you may see by watching his expression when he walks about like a groom carrying a straw in his mouth. Another of his diversions is to go under the table at meal times and quietly bite all your bootlaces in two. He will often leave them hanging by a thread, so that when you get into the street, they will all burst simultaneously. He will also lick all the blacking off, so that your boots appear as if you have been walking through a river. He is never so happy as when he can creep into a dressing room where a number of boots are laid out. Then he seats himself solemnly, and spends the whole afternoon in making a meal off them. I am sure he must have some Semitic blood in his veins, for he delights in anything bright, particularly gold, silver, and jewellery, which he will gnaw by the hour whenever he is permitted to do so. He will chew up a pearl button in no time, and if a pin, needle, hook or eye is left about on the carpet he never fails to appropriate it. I am always afraid that his rashness in this respect may bring him to an untimely end. It is certainly far more dangerous to him than the English climate, which, after all, is not much more trying than that of some parts of Tunisia.

As he is an Arab, I suppose one ought also to fear for him the dangers of the evil eye; and I always shudder whenever anyone tries to show off his knowledge by quoting Tom Moore's unfortunately familiar lines about the 'dear gazelle.' Certain it is that, when the other day a heartless woman of my acquaintance had exclaimed, 'What an idea to have a gazelle! I am sure I hope it will die!' he suddenly took to refusing his food, and showed signs of pining away. When, however, I had hung a very potent amulet round his neck, the spell was immediately broken, and his appetite and sturdiness revived.

He is one of the best companions I know, and will keep up a conversation for a long time, answering every remark with the most expressive bleats and grunts, as if he understood precisely what was said to him. When he is affectionately disposed, he

puts up his nose and sniffs my face with great diligence. This is his idea of kissing. He cannot bear to be left alone for an instant, and directly I get up to leave the room he makes a point of trotting out after me. However sleepy he may be in the evening, he is always averse from being taken off to his rug in the scullery, and directly he is let out in the morning he rushes off and scratches at my bed-room door, imploring admission. As he has taken so extremely well to his life in England, and is adored by everyone who sees him, I can only wonder how it is that people in England do not more often import gazelles as pets. No doubt they require a great deal of patience, but their inexhaustible charms afford an ample return for its expenditure.

TENT LIFE IN INDIA

BY COLONEL T. S. ST. CLAIR

If the sportsman at home in the climate he is generally condemning, but which for health compares so favourably with that of the tropics, and who enjoys so many daily comforts that are unknown in India, welcomes with enthusiasm his release from bondage in order to participate in his favourite sport, is it any wonder that his brother sportsman abroad seizes eagerly the opportunity of the thorough change that tent-life affords? The monotonous routine of regimental existence, in which social festive gatherings play so large a part without affording much real, healthy excitement, becomes in a tropical country, in spite of what our lady novelists may depict, most wearisome to the sportsman, weighing upon him so oppressively in its regularity and insipid sameness as to render an occasional break of some sort absolutely necessary. What can offer a more welcome or a more invigorating contrast than the unqualified pleasures of jungle-life under canvas, far from civilisation as well as from the many social influences of the madding crowd, where the escaped devotee, free from all conventional restraints, can indulge unquestioned and uncontrolled, without let or hindrance, his favourite sport or proclivity, whatever it may be? What a sense of liberty there is in being absolute masters of our own movements, able to strike our camp or otherwise to gratify our inclinations as the wish or exigency of the moment may determine! And the health that comes from living and sleeping in the open air! Our medical journals have recently referred to the fact that patients removed from the closed-in walls of rooms,

where ventilation, especially at night, is generally so very defective, have speedily shown improved symptoms and greater recuperative powers directly they were placed in the open air. I feel sure all Anglo-Indians will bear me out in saying that a very similar result is always noticeable whenever life at an up-country station is exchanged for that under canvas. No matter how enervated and played out you may have felt, a very few days in the jungle, even in the hottest weather, brings fresh life and renewed vigour. I can assert from personal experience that a trip of this nature used to act upon me like a stimulating tonic, bracing up the system just as an expedition to the sea now does in these more favoured latitudes. Therefore sportsmen at home will, I am certain, sympathise with their Indian compatriot, who, whilst undergoing the monotonous tortures of vapid, weary exile in a heat-stricken, insect-biting, spirit-depressing, enervating climate, at a gossiping up-country station in the plains of India during the hot season, is suddenly galvanised into unexpected energy by the welcome suggestion of a sporting trip to the jungle, either alone or else accompanied by one kindred spirit with whom he can have perfect fellowship, whose tastes are identical with his own, whilst he is one in whom he can place that perfect confidence which is the outcome of previous similar shikar trips in company. Unless he fulfils these conditions he is best left behind. But presuming your companion to be as keen as you are, how eagerly do you discuss your plan of action with your combined means! Should the grand mahseer be your attraction, then your arrangements are more simple; but should big game be your principal aim, then more elaborate details have to be considered, including the despatch of shikaries to ascertain the whereabouts of animals, in order that by their reports the movements of the camp may be regulated.

Let us suppose that our plans are decided upon, and the general direction of our operations arranged. Stores and all other necessaries for ourselves, our servants, and our animals must be obtained; for we expect to be away from civilisation upwards of two months, and are consequently obliged to take with us everything essential that is not obtainable from the native villages. All is despatched to the first camping ground in time to be in readiness for our arrival. If possible, we start the evening prior to the day our leave commences, in order to gain the extra time. Tents should have been pitched under the best leafy shelter on cleanly ground, whilst arrangements for water and for supplies should have been made. Woe betide the

servants if the ground has not been well swept, for these choice shady situations are those selected by cattle, and ravenous are the ticks they leave behind them. I can well picture to myself such a camp, one of several engraven on my memory. Imagine the tent—I think it was called a Swiss cottage—under a glorious shady peepul tree, one of many that formed a grove which sheltered perfectly from the burning sun above; the hum of insects and the drone of bees sound sleepily musical, whilst the occasional shrill scream of the small green parrot or the soft cōō, cōō of the dove forms a welcome diversion. Some thirty yards to leeward is pitched a routee for the servants, near which our cook has established his kitchen, consisting of a few large stones on which to rest his pots. It is surprising what a superb dinner he can turn out, not only cooked, but also served up in first-rate style, with such meagre appliances. *Potage, Poisson, Entrée, Relevé, Entremets.* Nothing comes amiss to him, with a cup of the best coffee to conclude the repast. Our horses are picketed in Indian fashion, with heel as well as head ropes, and near them my riding camel and dogs find a cool resting spot. The native hackeries that convey our baggage and stores are also near, the bullocks tethered alongside, whilst the drivers, as well as the numerous servants, are all busy with their respective occupations, each carrying out his special duty only, but doing that to perfection, and taking in its proper performance a real pride, the remembrance of which does one good to recall. The native village is at some little distance. For many reasons it is not advisable to be too near to it. At night the persistent chorus of a pack of jackals succeeds, while it lasts, in driving away sleep, whilst the melancholy cadence of a wailing hyena or the loud cry of a sambur resounds through the jungle. Occasionally the deep roar of a prowling tiger might be heard, and would make our watchman congratulate himself on the blazing camp fires that he keeps well fed to warn off intruders. But at daybreak another world would awake, and pea-fowl, jungle-fowl, partridges, and many other birds would begin their daily task by calling in all directions, and the wonderful constant murmur of the invisible insect life would add its quota to the innocent rejoicings of the early morning. Everything in nature betokens peace, until the surface is probed and the law of 'the survival of the fittest' becomes apparent. It is only then we recognise that life preys on life, and that destruction of life is the universal law. It is not until the eagerly looked-for reports of the shikaries are received that the peace on our part is broken. Then, each

FIT TO FIGHT TO THE BITTER END

successive day offers a new sporting experience. To-day there may be news of big game, a tiger, a panther, or a bear. To-morrow the powerful large sambur, or the pretty spotted chetal deer, may be the object of pursuit. When no other game offers, a stalk after small chinkara ravine deer may be attempted, or occasionally a day may be had at small game, partridge, quail, snipe, or duck, depending on the locality and season; but for obvious reasons small game is not shot when in the neighbourhood of nobler attractions. Perhaps, when the opportunity occurs, a beat for the old grey boar may be undertaken in order to enjoy a select hunt, or simply a start before daybreak may be made to waylay him in the plains as he returns from his nightly expeditions to his favourite feeding grounds. It is surprising the distances pig will travel for food. This accounts for their wonderful going condition, the mighty boar being able for the first mile or two to outstrip the fastest horse, whilst, no matter how severely wounded he may be, he is generally fit to fight determinedly to the bitter end.

NUTTOO

Let me describe the occupation of one day. After a most luxurious tub of bracing and comparatively cold water, from which it is difficult to withdraw, so deliciously fascinating is the stream from a big sponge that runs over the shoulders and pours down the back, breakfast is announced. During the discussion of this repast the head shikari is seen approaching. 'Well, Nuttoo, what is the news?' is our impatient inquiry when yet he is at some distance. 'I have marked four leopards down, Sahib, two full-grown and two cubs. We should start as soon as possible,' is his reply, accompanied by a respectful salaam to each of us. 'Is it far, Nuttoo?' I inquire. 'About an hour, Sahib, but the place is open. It is bad for beating.' I usually made a tour of the camp after breakfast, inspecting the animals and chatting with the servants, not forgetting to feed the sleek well-groomed horses that always received me with a grateful whinny, but on this occasion time pressed and preparations had to be made.

Now it must be remembered that this was the hot weather, and that the sun was simply baking, whilst the refraction from the ground was dazzling in the extreme to the eyes, besides being sufficient of itself to cause sunstroke. I always treated

the Sun (with a big S) with considerable respect, knowing how far-reaching are its injurious effects even when nominally slight. I wore down the spinal column a thick strip of wadding, some four inches wide, sewn into my shikar coat. My helmet had a quilted cover, to the back of which was attached a quilted flap long enough to protect the back of the neck, that highly sensitive space between the helmet and the top of the coat. A large pugarie was wound round the helmet, whilst inside was a net bag in which was suspended a wet sponge. A substantial cummerbund round the waist completed my tropical defensive costume, other sporting garments being as usual, but all being strictly of one uniform colour, that of kaki. An additional precaution in the really hottest weather I always took, especially when I expected to be stationary in an exposed position. My helmet complete was then plunged into a bucket of water, being kept there for some seconds, until the cover with the pugarie were completely soaked through. True, this added to the weight, but I thought this a small consideration in view of the thorough protection it afforded from the sun. I have come in after a long day's exposure and found the helmet even then still damp under the pugarie. The reckless may smile at my precautions, but the proof of the pudding is in the eating. Although for years I hunted and shot throughout the hot season, I never was sick or sorry the whole time I was in India, I never had a touch of a climatic complaint, and, so far as I know, the country has not affected one of my organs, except possibly my eyes. I cannot recommend my plan to gay young bachelors who still retain their independence, for it is apt to remove the becoming thatch that nature provides, and thereby to reduce their value in the matrimonial market. Let them therefore remember that such a contingency must be allowed for.

On this occasion a few beaters—some twenty-five—were all that were considered necessary. We proceeded quietly towards the place where the leopards had been marked down. This was an outlying ridge of hill separated from the main hill by an intervening valley, through which a road ran. The former was studded with rocks and large detached stones, and was fairly covered with small scrubby thorn bushes and a few scattered trees. The latter was more thickly wooded with larger trees and considerable undergrowth. The shikari placed us on the slope of the main hill, about two hundred yards apart, explaining that the beaters would start on the further side of the opposite ridge, and that as there was no certainty how the animals would

come, we must keep a sharp look out and do the best we could. As soon as the beat began, a leopard, which no doubt had seen me on my first approach, jumped on to a flat rock at the summit of the opposite ridge. It put its head between its forelegs as it sat down, its paws bending over the edge of the stone, and there it watched either me or my companion intently for some ten minutes, looking against the sky-line as big as a tiger; in fact, I thought at first from its apparent size it must be one. The distance was at least 300 yards. The nearer advance of the beaters could now be heard. Suddenly the leopard jumped from the rock and ran down the slope towards my companion. I did not attempt to fire because the distance was too great for precision, whilst the rocks and bushes prevented a clear view. When the animal reached the road it stood still to listen beside a large tree. It could not then have been more than 50 yards from my companion, but he evidently was unable to see it. I estimated the range at about 180 yards, so putting up the 150 yards sight I fired. I had a shell in the right barrel, and it went a trifle high, exploding in the trunk of the tree just above the animal's shoulder and causing white splinters. I suppose I took too full a sight. The leopard, startled at the noise of the explosion so close, and hearing the beaters behind, ran forward growling about five or six yards, and again stood still, being unable exactly to decide in which direction safety lay. I hit it this time with a bullet, rolling it over, but it picked itself up, and, at a very slow trot, mounted the main hill between us. My companion then had a view, and gave it both barrels, but missed on account of the intervening cover. I had picked up my 12-bore gun. With this I had a snap-shot as the animal crept through the bushes, but I evidently also missed. I then ran hard to head the beast, and luckily catching a glimpse of it some 40 yards away as it was disappearing very hard hit into the jungle, I rolled it over dead, the ball entering at the back of the neck and coming out at the nose. It turned out to be the full-grown female. Her dimensions were, from nose to root of tail 3 feet 8 inches; from nose to tip of tail 6 feet 2 inches; height 1 foot 8 inches; girth behind shoulder 2 feet.

Whilst I was looking at her I heard cries from the beaters that another leopard was on foot, so, rushing back to my post, I was in time to see one of the cubs running at its best pace across the slope of the ridge in front. It must have been over 200 yards from me, and perhaps 350 from my companion. As soon as it broke cover, shot after shot was fired by each of us. I know that

I fired four shots. The beaters then began to call out that the animal was hit, climbing up trees to get out of its way. We advanced together with cocked rifles in the direction pointed out, not knowing at what moment we might expect a charge, and soon discovered the poor brute alive but powerless for offence. One shot only had by the merest chance struck the backbone about an inch from the root of the tail, passing out at the side. It was sufficient, however, to paralyse the hind quarters. The cub growled and showed its teeth as we approached, but a shot through the head put it out of pain.

The next day we bagged the male leopard. It had been marked into a small isolated hill where the trees were very thick, so that shooting was difficult. I was posted about 300 yards to the right of my companion. Very soon after the beat began, I saw the leopard cautiously stealing down towards me. About 80 yards away were some rocks that offered two passages. One led into the open in my direction, the other led through the trees towards my companion. The animal took the former path. I waited to let it come nearer, when it must suddenly have winded me, for it turned round and bounded back, taking the second path at a trot. A leopard's shoulder is a small mark, whilst the trunks of the trees were unusually thick. I missed with both barrels. The animal then broke into full speed, going like a greyhound. It left the trees at the bottom of the slope, and entered the more open ground, passing my companion about 150 yards away. He fired both barrels of his rifle, one of Dougall's, carrying a spherical projectile, and having an extremely low trajectory at sporting distances. The first shot missed. The second hit the leopard exactly where it should have done, behind the shoulder, and the animal, at the pace it was going, rolled over and over about three times just like a shot rabbit. I never saw so pretty a shot. My companion made an allowance of about two lengths, he told me, when firing. He had used a shell made simply by leaving a hole when casting the ordinary ball. This hole was filled with detonating powder, and was plugged with wax. It had penetrated the lungs, exploding in the off-shoulder, where it had shattered the bone, and lead splinters were found almost in every part of the body. The leopard measured 3 feet 11 inches from nose to root of tail; 6 feet 8 inches from nose to end of tail; height at shoulder 2 feet 2 inches; girth behind shoulder 2 feet. The breadth of side which was the mark to be fired at was only 7½ inches, so it can be readily understood that a body 3 feet 11 inches by 7½ inches, going full speed at 150 yards, does not offer an easy shot.

WILL STRIKE DOWN AN UNFORTUNATE BEATER IF MET IN THE WAY

The day following, the fourth member of this happy family was marked down, but the cub broke through the beaters, not offering us a shot. Our luck was considerable in killing three of them under such unfavourable circumstances. Let me here remark that I cannot recommend this wild long-range firing at dangerous game for imitation. I was more or less of a griffin at the time, and was eager to make a bag; but for safety to yourself as well as to the beaters—and every good sportsman certainly considers them as much as he does himself—animals of the feline race should never be fired at unless there is a certainty of disabling them. A close range is therefore desirable to enable a vital spot to be struck. Most accidents occur from a wounded beast. As a rule, unless when there are young, all animals attempt at first to escape, and will fly from man. Even when wounded they differ considerably in character, just as domestic animals or human beings do; one tiger, for instance, will fight to the last with the greatest pluck and determination, whilst another will run and skulk from cover to cover, and will utterly decline to come to close quarters. But both animals will strike down an unfortunate beater if met in the way, and therefore it is the duty, I think, of sportsmen to endeavour always to obtain a close shot at first, and, whatever happens, to keep, if possible, at least one barrel in reserve.

As I always like to give a concrete example to point the moral, let me relate an unfortunate occurrence that happened to a brother officer of my own. He was my usual companion on shikar expeditions, but on this occasion I had left the camp two days before, and was not therefore with him. News was brought in of a tiger, and three officers went in pursuit. One luckily was a surgeon, and a particularly able man in his profession. The tiger was beaten out, and proved to be a cowardly brute. From the account I heard, the animal was severely but not vitally wounded at first, and subsequently laid up in one clump of cover after another, from each of which it was turned out, snap-shots only being obtained. It was hit occasionally, but not disabled, and so the pursuit went on until at last there was a cry that the animal was dead. Without waiting for confirmation of the news, the whole party seems at once to have assumed that it was correct. One sportsman handed his rifle over to a native to carry; another placed his at half-cock and sloped it on his shoulder; the third—my friend—went down prepared, and inquired where the tiger was. 'There,' replied the native, 'in that bush.' 'It is not dead,' said my friend, 'I saw it move,' and he put up his rifle to fire at

the animal that was lying prostrate a few yards away. Whether he missed or not I do not know, but at the report the brute, with a roar, was out in a moment like a flash of lightning, and seized its assailant. The first thing the other two sportsmen saw was the tiger bounding past them with their companion in its mouth, his head and arms being on one side and his legs on the other, the whole body being apparently, as they described it, covered by the jaws. They were not prepared for the occurrence, and were afraid to fire as the tiger disappeared, so seizing their rifles they followed, and a short distance off discovered my friend extended on the ground, the tiger not being visible. They placed him on a charpoy, face downwards, to allow the hæmorrhage to escape that otherwise would have caused suffocation, and he was carried into camp. When the tiger picked him up, the left arm was pinned to his side in the creature's mouth. The bone of this arm was crushed, and one large tooth had penetrated the lungs, breaking two ribs. The other large tooth caught in a metal cartridge belt round his waist. It may be of interest if I add that he dwindled away almost to nothing, weighing when he left India a trifle over six stone; but a good constitution brought about his recovery, although he never recovered the full use of his arm. The tiger was found dead a very short distance away, this having been its last expiring effort.

The most enjoyable feature of tent life, next to the buoyancy of perfect health that it usually promotes, is the intimate association with Nature that it generates. A sportsman detached for a lengthened period from the society of another European is compelled to a great extent to be satisfied with his own thoughts. The natives who are his companions form part of the natural world around him, and if he is wise, he will study them, as he will also the birds, the animals, the insects, and the growing vegetation with which he is daily and almost hourly brought into contact, endeavouring to learn the many interesting and instructive lessons they offer, which are largely on the surface and to be had for the seeking. He never ought to feel solitary, any more than a student would in the midst of a valuable library; for has he not at his command an opportunity for practical observation far more instructive, if properly used, than the reading of books? Let me advise him to put into writing daily the results of his experiences. Would that I had systematically done so! Memory is treacherous and evanescent, and very valuable in after life will he find detailed records of facts and impressions made at the time of their occurrence. When really far away from civilisa-

tion, the game is so little disturbed that the camp may often be said to be pitched in its midst, and the shortest 'walk abroad' may yield unexpected sport. It never does, therefore, to be unprepared for eventualities. A sudden surprise constantly happens. Tent life offers few blank days; there is always some employment of a sporting nature. The shot-gun, the spear, or the preparation of skins and specimens fills in the intervals when the rifle cannot be used, and no trip of this description can be brought to a close without providing a store of recollections, stirring and otherwise, of the greatest interest to at least the chief actor in them. Let me close this article by narrating a few such memories.

I remember on one occasion very nearly deliberately potting a native. I had been sitting over water all night, and as I had seen nothing but a solitary bear that had not offered me a shot, and as the previous evening sambur had been defiantly calling, I started at the first streak of dawn alone to prospect the locality on the chance of finding some animal about. As I moved cautiously along, eyes and ears on the *qui vive*, I detected a movement on the top of a large rock under a wide-spreading tree. The sun had not risen, and in the early dim light I fancied the black object must be a bear. I raised my rifle and took careful aim at about the centre of the body. I was in the act of pressing the trigger, holding my breath for steadiness, when I discovered through the notch of the back-sight that a human face was peering at me from beneath the foliage. What the man was doing there, far from any village, I never discovered, and I never saw him afterwards. Perhaps his object was the same as my own, and he had chosen his position as commanding the approach to the water, which it certainly did. That man probably gave me credit for possessing eyesight equal to his own, and I am sure never realised how narrow his escape had been. If he did, his relief of mind could not have been greater than was my own on discovering how close to the commission of deliberate homicide I had unintentionally been led.

There are several descriptions of deer and antelope constantly met with in tent life. The nilghai, or blue bull, is the largest of the Indian antelope, and stands nearly fourteen hands. I never cared to kill it. It always seemed to me to partake largely of the nature of the cow, so ungainly is its appearance. It is indifferent eating, carries poor horns, so that there is really no sport in shooting it; and although I have heard it affords a good gallop with the spear if it can be beaten into the open, I never attempted

to hunt it. The really sporting antelope of India is the black buck; very fascinating is the sport of stalking it in the open plain, and very great is the satisfaction of dropping this handsome animal with its spiral horns and beautiful skin. On one occasion I got a buck in a curious way. It was in the open, and as I could not possibly approach unseen, I adopted the usual plan of circling, never attempting to walk directly towards or even to look in its direction, but starting on a wide circle, gradually reduced it. The buck at once stopped feeding and gazed fixedly at me, turning on its forefeet to watch me as I walked round. I soon noticed that it showed signs of uneasiness, and feeling sure that it would not permit of a nearer approach, I determined to take advantage of a tree to rest my rifle against its trunk and risk a long shot. The buck was regarding me steadfastly at the time, its nose in the air, apparently trying the wind, whilst its horns were thrown back. I put up the 250 yards sight and aimed at the shoulder, and it fell motionless to the shot. Much pleased at my success, I hastened up, my shikari, who had been waiting under cover, joining me, but no sign of a bullet mark could I find. We turned the animal over twice and admired its plump condition. 'Very odd'—I remarked, 'where can it have been hit? but hallal it at once,' this being, of course, necessary to enable the flesh to be eaten by my Mahometan servants. The man took out his knife and began to cut the antelope's throat, when the buck suddenly became conscious, struggled to its feet, and with an effort threw off his grasp and started away. I was so overcome with laughter at my shikari's discomfiture that at first I never thought of firing; but he, with a keener eye than mine for the main chance, and seeing nothing ludicrous about the escape of so much good meat, called out, 'Maro, Sahib, maro!' ('Fire, sir, fire!'), and I brought the gallant buck down in earnest this time with the left barrel of my 12-bore rifle. A careful examination showed that the heavy bullet of the first shot had passed over the shoulder and had just caught the extreme point of one horn, breaking off about half an inch from the end. The concussion had stunned the animal, and rendered it perfectly unconscious until awakened by the sensation of having its throat cut.

I recollect on one occasion, when unarmed, I was riding across the plain and came upon a large number of black buck. There must have been several hundreds. Out of mere 'divarsion' I thought I would ride after them. They consisted to a great extent of does and fawns. The pace was slow on account of the young animals, and without difficulty I found myself amongst them.

It was a most interesting sight. The does and fawns kept together, the bucks being distributed on the outside. Every now and then two of the young bucks would challenge, and out of playfulness would stop, quite regardless of me, for a short tussle together, resuming their gallop after the encounter. I stopped after about a two-miles spin. The antelope did not seem to fear me greatly, and I was so close alongside the body of the herd that if I had had a spear I could have used it very effectively, whilst with a breech-loading gun I could have easily secured the best bucks.

An amusing episode when out sambur shooting once occurred to me. I was in camp with a brother officer who was unusually keen, but who had not had much experience. In default of other sport we decided to try a beat down the slope of an adjacent hill, and we were posted some 400 yards apart at the bottom of a wide funnel-shaped ravine that was very clear of undergrowth and was dotted with trees, so that the view was fairly open. It was a difficult place for this reason to guard with only two guns, as the game might come anywhere. The beat began, and very soon I saw in the distance a sambur stag descending the hill towards me on a line that led close to my position. It is a pretty and interesting sight to watch the cautious advance of an animal under such circumstances; to see it stop at intervals, try the wind and gaze round, as it listens first to the beaters and then forward in an endeavour to discover whether danger lurks in front. As I sat screened from its view I heard on my right a dry stick crack, and turning, I discovered to my amazement my companion, accompanied by his gun-coolie, coolly stalking my sambur. He did not see me, nor did he know exactly where I was posted. He, however, had seen the stag, and recognising that it would not pass anywhere within shot of him, was endeavouring to place himself across its path. I watched his careful progress as, bending low and taking advantage of bushes, he deliberately crept in front of me. There was a very large boulder of rock abutting the track by which the stag was descending, and this the eager sportsman made for, planting himself behind it not three yards from the track. I must say I was much tempted to fire over his head at the stag, which I could well see, but which was hidden from him by the stone. I thought, however, I would let him have his chance and would watch events, being rather amused than otherwise at his actions. The stag, occasionally stopping, came on noiselessly, and was upon the hidden sportsman before he knew it. I don't know which was the more

astonished, the animal or its pursuer, when it appeared suddenly on the track round the corner of the stone, almost touching him. The stag was the first to recover its presence of mind, and away it bounded down hill at its fastest pace. My companion had to turn round before he could fire, and by the time he had done so the animal was some distance away, going like the wind. I saw him throw up his rifle and hurriedly, with a bang, bang, miss clean with both barrels, his bullets whistling unpleasantly close in my direction. The stag came on towards me, passing within about forty yards. I hit it far back with my right barrel and dropped it with my left, and naturally was very pleased at the result. I must do my companion the justice to say that he was too good a sportsman to have left his position had he known where I was stationed.

I find that my best pair of sambur horns are 40 in. in length and measure 11 in. round the burr at the base, 9 in. round the top just before bifurcation, and 6 in. round the thinnest part of the beam. They are a good specimen, but not out of the way, as they fall off considerably in weight, only turning the scale at 16 lbs. I have another pair a little heavier, but neither are more than ordinary horns. A pair of chetal horns I possess measure in length 29 in. and weigh 5½ lbs. I give these measurements as they may possibly be of interest for purposes of comparison.

The last sporting incident I will relate was an amusing instance of shooting a tigress from one of those special loopholed masonry constructions used by Rajahs only, for no English sportsman would care, except as a novel experience, to assassinate a wretched animal from such a position of security. We were the guests of a very hospitable obliging Rajah whose name perhaps I had better not disclose. For the special gratification of a high political official, who was a member of our camp, he had already treated us to animal fights and to shooting of all sorts, from elephants and otherwise, concluding each day's work with an elaborate dinner followed by a nautch of an unusual number of his most fascinating damsels. But in all our beats we had not come across a tiger, and therefore he proposed to tether at night a bullock in front of his shooting box, assuring us that the bagging of a bagh was a certainty. To add to the attraction the convivial Rajah promised to accompany us and to provide everything necessary. I did not care to take part in the expedition, and remained in camp. The building consisted of two rooms. The outer was loopholed for some six or seven guns. Each assassin had a soft razai or quilted mattress to lie on, and com-

manded from his embrasure an open space as clear and as level as a billiard table, in which was fastened an unfortunate bullock. This room was kept absolutely dark, and no smoking in it was permitted; but beyond the double doors the inner room was ablaze with lights, and contained every possible requirement, including cases of champagne and liquors, sufficient to have lasted the party for six weeks. As soon as it began to get dark the loopholes were manned and silence maintained. The Rajah took the centre embrasure, and it was arranged that when the tiger arrived on the scene—by-the-bye there seemed never to have been any doubt about the Hamlet in the piece—he was to give an admonitory signal before firing by a sharp whistle, when a broadside from the whole party was to be poured in upon the unhappy beast.

Amongst the sportsmen was a very good fellow, whose only fault was having a *soupçon* of brag in his composition, and accordingly it was the delight of the youngsters whenever they could in any way lower his colours. He possessed an old-fashioned muzzle-loading rifle, that carried a large belted spherical ball, and he somewhat ostentatiously congratulated himself about this weapon, saying, 'At all events, I shall know my bullet, so don't any of you fellows try to claim my shot!'

It was fairly dark, and the moon had not risen, when the bullock was seen to start round towards the jungle and to lower its head as if to receive a charge. A gaunt lean tigress was then observed creeping stealthily towards her prey, her belly almost touching the ground as she noiselessly advanced. The bullock circled round as far as the rope would allow and presented its horns; but the tigress, with a couple of bounds, evaded them, and, with a single stroke of her paw that looked like a simple pat, felled it to the ground. She then jumped upon it, and buried her fangs in the side of the throat. Every rifle covered her, and all waited for the Rajah's signal; but he, forgetting at this supreme moment everything in his excitement, pulled both triggers of his rifle at the same time. Immediately every rifle was discharged, and the room was filled with thick smoke, like the between-decks of a man-of-war. It was some minutes before the clouds cleared sufficiently to enable a view outside to be obtained, when, to every-one's astonishment, the bullock was to be seen dead, but the tigress nowhere. In vain they peered about. The animal had disappeared. As the range had been only some ten or twelve yards, each sportsman knew he must have hit her, our belted-ball friend being especially certain of his aim; but as nothing more in the way of sport could be done that night, they adjourned to the

inner room for a festive conclusion to the day's proceedings. In the morning they were up at daybreak, shoulder to shoulder they followed the bloody trail with cocked rifles ready for a charge, and much under a hundred yards they found the tigress lying dead, having been riddled with bullets. How the poor creature managed to drag herself so far with so many vital wounds was wonderful. The Rajah's two bullets had gone in together behind the shoulder, but a little far back, whilst other wounds led to considerable controversies. At first the double shot behind the shoulder was claimed for the belted ball, but courtesy and the evident truth soon caused this assertion to be withdrawn. Lots were drawn for the skin, and the winner at once set to work to superintend a post-mortem, so to decide the rival claims of the sportsmen. Each wound was opened up, and the bullet, if there, extracted. But where was the belted ball? Nowhere could it be found, and the face of our boastful friend became longer and longer, as he began to realise the possibility of a miss. In the midst of a heated argument on the subject we heard a quiet remark from outside the circle, 'Here is the belted-ball. I have just cut it out of the bullock,' and the object of discussion was handed over to its owner, amidst the merriment of the youngsters. I never quite arrived at a certainty as to whether this was the identical belted ball that had been fired, or whether the whole proceeding had been previously planned. But this was not the only amusing feature of the night's shikar. A critical examination of the skin revealed the fact that the ear of the tigress had been marked, whilst the hair was rubbed and inclined to be mangy, and contained unmistakable sawdust. It is needless to say that the awful thought of a 'bagged' animal from the Rajah's menagerie, starved for the occasion, and brought in order to ensure 'sport' for the Sahibs, was scouted as a libel on our hospitable host, and he received united thanks for the success of his arrangements. But down in the breast of each sportsman present lurks, I am sure, the suspicion that on this occasion the Rajah scored properly at his expense, and that he deserved the treatment for consenting to participate in such very questionable 'sport.'

Lastly, may I remark in all sincerity that the most vivid reminiscence of tent life, and the one that lingers longest, is the memory of those awful thirsts experienced when toiling hard under the hottest of suns in the plains, or when climbing, often rifle in hand, up the mountain side, the ground quivering with the heat and the rocks being scorchingly hot? How often when returning to camp have I carefully nursed such a thirst, and

refused to lose it in a wayside, lukewarm pool, preferring to retain it in its hard, parched-up condition in order to indulge fond visions of prospective drinks all the way back, that culminated in the stern reality immediately on arrival! Iced soda-water, with claret or iced bottled beer was the nectar that filled the foaming goblet, and as it disappeared with a huge sigh of relief, I felt that the gratification was worth all the hard labour by which so valuable a thirst had been acquired. Let not the reader imagine from these or from my antecedent remarks that I was a *bon-vivant* and fond of such indulgences. On the contrary, I have always held strongly that sport and abstemiousness must go together. No sportsman can possibly undergo the fatigue of a long tiring day in the hot weather, or can keep his nerves in order, unless he is temperate in all things and in good training. I made it a rule to touch nothing alcoholic whilst the sun was up, and the draught I speak of, which lingers so fondly in the memory when recalling tent life, was probably the first of the day. It is a most welcome provision of Nature, exemplifying again the accepted principle, that the poison and the antidote are usually to be found together, that by means of the extreme heat our liquor was cooled, and that the hotter the wind the quicker and the better did its temperature approach perfection. This was effected by means of evaporation, a simple enough cause to achieve so great and so satisfactory a result.

BRITISH SPORTS AND FOREIGN DESCRIPTIONS

BY HAROLD MACFARLANE

THE intelligent Hindoo who, it is averred, described billiards as a game in which two men, armed with long sticks, poked at a ball, while one player exclaimed 'Oh!' and the other 'Hard lines!' was, I am inclined to think, a bit of a plagiarist; whilst the Kaffir warrior who is reported to have belaboured a great boulder with a huge pole, shouting 'Hang it!' the while, under the impression that he was following closely in the footsteps of certain players he had witnessed playing at golf, was either a myth or a bit of a fool.

Without doubt there is something very amusing in a foreigner's description of a game with which we are familiar and he is entirely ignorant. His efforts to render the technicalities of the sport so as to make it understandable by his compatriots, his ignorance of its nomenclatural features, and his endeavours to surmount the difficulty, together render his attempt supremely funny; so, may I add, is the ordinary male mortal's description of the ordinary female mortal's outdoor garb from the feminine point of view. But our foreign friend does not make such an egregious mess of it as the 'intelligent Hindoo' and 'Kaffir warrior' anecdotes would have us believe; he reports what he sees, and what he imagines he would feel were he a player, and

if his phraseology is peculiar, his imagination fearful, his description is full of intelligence; we recognise the difficulties he has to encounter, and acknowledge that he conquers them very creditably; it is therefore in no captious or unfriendly spirit that I recall some of the quaint idiosyncrasies he has embodied in his descriptions of essentially British sports.

Some fourteen or fifteen years ago a very precious report of an England *v.* Australia match at the Oval, written by an adventurous Frenchman, was presented to English readers by a contemporary. The enterprising foreigner having 'rendered' himself at the Oval, appreciatively remarked: 'In entering, I paid for the privilege to observe the struggle; and I shall soon say that never in my life have I seen, at so cheap a price, a spectacle so extraordinary.' The day was of the hottest—so, by the way, was the scoring, for at the close Murdoch was not out 145, Scott not out 101, McDonnell had aggregated 103, while the total was 363 for two wickets; and our Gallic acquaintance having remarked to himself, 'Ah! the combat has place then in the open air!' confessed to a feeling of astonishment, 'for naturally I figured to myself that when it was hot they should play cricket in some pavilion.' The English team—did ever a finer step into the field? W. W. Read, it will be remembered, going in when eight wickets were down, scored more than a hundred—'having arranged themselves irregularly . . . at certain distances from two light barricades of wood . . . I see two players of the Australian party march firmly to the barricades. Each one is habited in white costume, and carries a heavy staff with a broad blade; and, in addition, each one is fortified with stiff greaves and gauntlets of thick caoutchouc . . . I hesitate to believe that the delegates are upon the point to fight with weapons so dangerous, yet I find no other explanation of the armour.' Having taken their position at the wickets the observer 'happily assured' himself 'that they had not meditated a struggle together.' The bowling was terrific in the Frenchman's eyes; the ball, 'like a cannon bullet,' and of 'frightfully dangerous character,' was hurled furiously towards the legs of the Australian 'delegate;' surely Ulyett must have gone on first. 'But hold! with his staff the brave Australian has dexterousiy turned aside the projectile, which he has sent far to his right . . . where it has descended among the spectators. I fear some one shall be killed; yet it is nothing.' As the game proceeds the writer declares that he fails to comprehend how it is amusing for the players, 'and especially for the Australian delegates, who are in great peril at each instant. More than once the ball strikes

the leg of a delegate; but, thanks to the protecting greaves, fails to actually break it.' The strategy of the Australians is extolled, but the 'barbarity of the English' deplored, and finally our visitor offers to the public his 'regrets that some people, sensible, polished, and well raised, can find a pleasure to take part in a labour so dangerous. To stand upright during so many hours of an extreme heat; to take a violent exercise without any meat; to run deliberately a grave danger not less than that which one is obliged to encounter on a field of battle—all this is folly of the most profound.'

The phrase 'all this is folly of the most profound' appears to be the text upon which most foreign critics base their strictures upon our national games, though they sometimes, as in the case of the American papers, express themselves differently. At the time when the Australians visited Chicago in the fall of 1896, our American contemporaries had a good deal to say about cricket; one paper, indeed, went so far as to admit that cricket is a great game, but, alas! the admission was qualified by the addition of 'for Englishmen, dead men, or other phlegmatic and stoical people.'

An American writer, when giving a few particulars of the game, noticed the umpire, whose presence failed to attract the attention of our Gallic critic. 'There is an umpire,' he reported, 'and what he says goes. Englishmen are not kickers. The first cricket umpire was probably a Saxon king, and anybody who objected went away in the dead waggon.' It is in the cultivation of a pleasant breezy style that the American press is so supremely pre-eminent.

With regard to the game itself we learn that 'There is a runway, and a batter stands at each end thereof. A bowler, who corresponds to the American pitcher, throws the ball at a little wooden gate which stands just behind one of the batters. If they knock down the gate the man is out; if the ball is caught on the fly he is out; and he may be out in several other ways, including getting hit in the ear with the ball. When he hits the ball he scoots up and down the runway and scores a run per scoot. Sometimes he will scoot 300 times before he is put out, and the amount of exercise he gets is therefore about what a base-ball player would have if he made seventy-five home runs without going into the field between bats. Ten men must be put out to retire the side, instead of three. This is why the game usually lasts part of a century.'

A few years ago our Gallic neighbours would have applied to

football much the same language as the Chinese gentleman, who was taken to an inter-University match, used in his description of the game for the benefit of friends in his native country. A translation of the report he is said to have written runs as follows: 'The handsome youths attack one another, tread upon one another; they bruise, they wound, they dislocate the joints of one another, they break each other's noses, they kill one another. From beneath a pyramid of sprained members, broken collar-bones, and bruised heads, they drag out a gladiator, his hair matted, and his clothing soiled with mud made of dust and blood'—flowery language for the Flowery Land, but not particularly accurate. Thanks, however, to the Stade Français and the British teams it invites over to play them, the game has lost its terrors for the French spectators, who line the ropes and cry with vigour, "Vite! vite! Kick the little ballon! Kick it with the foot!" or otherwise encourage their representatives to further deeds of prowess; and it has even been described and commended in the press, a journal of Marseilles speaking learnedly of its *mêlée compacte*, its *demis agiles et audacieux*, its *longues passes et vigoureuses charges*, and the *règles précises qui obligent les joueurs à certaines formalités*; finally, the writer declared that as a game it was *séduisant et bien fait pour développer les muscles, la rapidité du coup d'œil, de la décision, le courage et le sang-froid.*

The times have changed since a writer in the Paris *Figaro* twenty years ago, and *à propos* of the 'Varsity Boat Race, explained that 'to the ninth of each boat is added a tenth. He does not mount on the barque, he mounts on horseback. He is called the "coachman;" he is only utilised during the preparatory exercises, and on the day of combat disappears. He is, so to speak, the trainer, and it is he who regulates the pace of the eight oars by corresponding movements on horseback. The crews are renewed every year. The coachman remains the same until he is no longer able to bestride his steed. The crews belong to the highest families in England. The proof is that it is not uncommon for two lords, whom roast beef has profited, to meet twenty years afterwards, and to recall, with lowered heads, those happy days of training when they only weighed forty-five kilogrammes.'

Twenty years have passed since then; athletic France has in the meanwhile awakened and does not seem likely to slumber again. There is no knowing what may occur in the next couple of decades, but many things may happen: the United States may meet a picked eleven of our champions on the cricket field on

equal terms; a French fifteen may, in sporting parlance, make rings round our choicest Rugby players. But we are a conservative nation with regard to our pastimes, and I doubt whether, twenty or forty years hence, any native of these isles who is not residing, or has never resided, in the United States will be able to describe a base-ball match in language that would pass muster in America, or translate into intelligible English the following passage from a report of a game of glorified rounders that took place a short time ago:—

'FIRST INNING

'Dowd began operations by ramming a clean one-sacker to Van Haltren's domain. Davis juggled Stenzel's erratic bounder and two Browns perched on the cushions. Doheny scooped up Harley's bunt, but hesitated till every corner was tenanted. Davis grappled Cross's drive, forced Harley, and nipped the runner at Joyceville. But Dowd tallied, and Stenzel gained third in the meantime. Gettig and Joyce made short work of Decker's weakling. One run.

'Decker required no aid on Van Haltren's languid jumper along port foul line. Four wide flings sent Tiernan strolling down the trail. Sir Mike moved up a peg on a passed ball. Joyce banged a warm lacer to left pasture for one sack, and Tiernan journeyed to third landing. Dowd contributed a yellow fumble on Davis's difficult soarer, and the ball rolled under right cordage. Umpire Andrews permitted Tiernan, Joyce, and Davis to trot home on the mishap. Taylor captured Doyle's lofty mis-cue. Gettig stabbed vainly at the whirling sphere. Three runs.'

After reading the above my sympathies more than ever went out to the intelligent foreigner who attempts to overcome the intricacies of our national sports. If our football and cricket reports are to him what the above excerpt is to him who writes, it is a matter of wonderment how our neighbours across the Channel or the ocean ever pierced the mystery as well as they have done.

THE OPENING DAY

BY ROSIA M. BURN

THE chestnut polo pony in the yellow cart is mad to be off; he has been pawing the earth and shaking his head, and trying to knock the groom out of the way with his nose ever since he came round to the door. Bill and I have shuffled into our greatcoats; so we snatch up our whips and 'woolly' gloves as we rush through the hall and pat our pockets to feel that we have forgotten nothing, then with an acrobatic feat we both spring into the cart from opposite sides at the same moment, and plump down.

'Are you right?' he asks.

'Right away!' I answer, tucking in the rugs.

Bill drops his hand and away we go.

'Bill,' with whom I am going out hunting, is my only brother; the dearest old thing that ever lived, and the very best to hounds that ever rode a horse. In my opinion no one can beat him, at least *only one*, and that one I am inwardly hoping to meet out hunting to-day.

I am longing to ask Bill if he has heard whether 'he' will be out or not; but somehow it makes me shy to ask, and I always feel myself turning pink when I mention his name—and yet it is only 'Jack,' prosaic enough to anyone else, no doubt, but *I* think it is the nicest name in the world.

Jack is nice and big and strong, and has that charming gentle way which some especially strong natures possess. Other people call him ugly—well, perhaps he is, rather, but *I* like ugly men.

Oh dear, how I wish I had the courage to ask Bill whether he has come yet to the Millbanks', who live close to us, and who I

know expected him to arrive last night for a fortnight's hunting in the vale! On the whole, I don't feel brave enough, for I know Bill will laugh at me if I blush, and I really could not bear that, so I must just sit in sad expectancy until we arrive at the meet, which is at the Red Gate, about six miles away.

What a lovely morning, soft and grey, and *smells* like hunting! Truly, it is good to be alive on a day like this, spinning along these English lanes with their broad grass sides on either hand, with the bright red hips and haws on the hedges (still rather thick and blind), sparkling with dewdrops in the sunshine and turning the hedgerows into fairyland.

'Ah, there they are; that's all right!' says Bill, between the puffs of his cigar; and looking up I see before us six little black dots and six bigger red spots, bobbing up and down behind the fence to our right about a mile ahead. Presently, as we watch, they grow larger and larger, and soon they emerge from their short-cut lane into the road in front of us: Will the huntsman on the old dun horse, two whippers-in, and two second horsemen, all appearing as if they had just come out of bandboxes, and twenty-two couple of happy-looking hounds jogging cheerily along. Bill smiles, 'Don't they look jolly?'

'Lovely!' I answer, with the same old gulp in my throat that I always feel at the sight of them, while the pony cocks his ears and makes a rush to get among them.

'Good morning, Will.'

'Glad to see you back, sir,' with his pleasant grin of welcome as we rattle past.

Arrived at the meet, we have time to look round, while we crawl out of our overcoats again, and see who are there—*my* time is fully occupied with straining my eyes in all directions to catch a glimpse of a check tweed coat, or failing that I shall surely be able to see his horses, the hog-maned brown and the flea-bitten grey, that I know so well? Where can they be? I am peering anxiously among the throng of men and horses, and nowhere can I see them. Oh, *how* sickening it all is! I do believe he is not out after all!

I always used to think I loved hunting for its own sake, and it did not matter who was out—but to-day? Well, it all seems somehow to have turned grey and cold suddenly. Thank goodness there is Nelly Millbank. She is my best friend, and she will know where in the world he is. I shall surely have the courage to ask her, and so I beckon her to come; but just as she arrives alongside, smiling brightly and anxious to know why I waved to

her, up struts Bill, putting an end to all my hopes once more by remaining close at hand, in lively conversation with Nelly, while he divests himself of his silken apron preparatory to getting on.

'Now then, up you go,' and I am tossed on to my little roan horse with a red ribbon in his tail. After my elastics are adjusted and I am duly settled, Bill climbs up on his big liver chestnut, who humps his back and squeals in sheer delight at being with hounds

SPINNING ALONG THESE ENGLISH LANES

again. I am in no humour for squeals or prancing, and feel very much inclined to job my horse in the mouth instead of enjoying his freshness as is my wont. To-day everything has gone wrong and I am feeling distinctly peevish, and all because I hoped——

'Ah, there you are at last!' I suddenly hear, in a cheery voice which makes my heart jump into my mouth. 'I have been looking for you everywhere in this hopeless crowd,' and springing

round with a funny little twinkling feeling running all up and down me, I confront the large presence of none other than Jack himself. There he is, in the check tweed coat I had looked so vainly for, and with that same delightfully tubbed appearance which he always presents. 'Hulloa!' I exclaim, feeling more than pink, 'Are *you* here? I never knew you were coming,' I find myself gabbling, emulating Ananias himself in the confusion of my joy; and so we find ourselves jogging along behind the others, side by side once more.

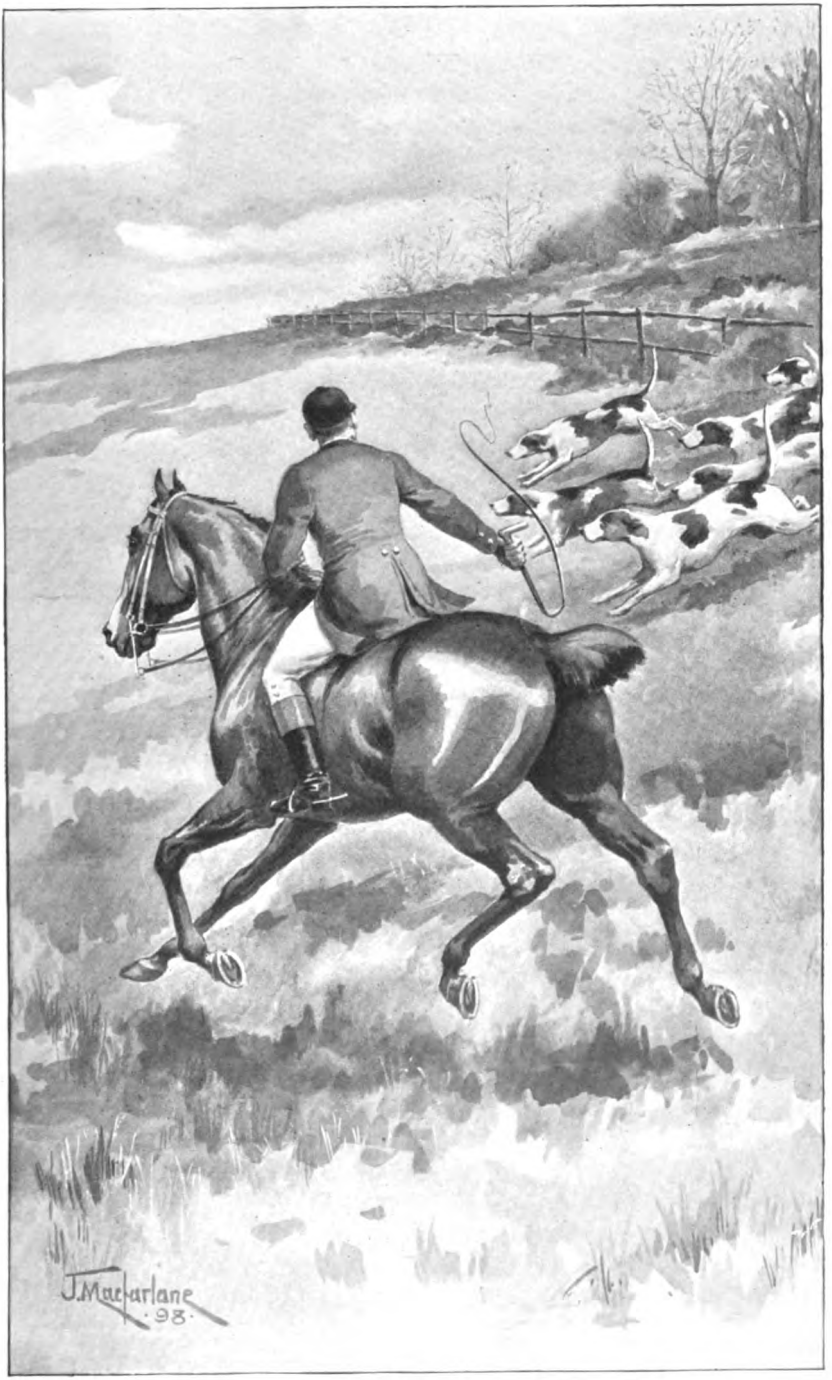
The weather seems to have changed again too—become so much brighter than it was a few minutes ago.

''Ounds, please, gentlemen, 'ounds,' sings out Fred, the first whip, as they move off, threading their way out of the enormous crowd, and jog off towards the gorse which we are going to draw.

Arrived at the covert side we are all asked by the master to keep as close to the fence as possible and not to go round the next corner.

Goodness! but why *do* they make such narrow gateways in these hunting countries? Here we all stand, 300 of us, jammed together in a corner, and the only means of escape is through this tiny gateway barely wide enough for one, and—listen! surely that was a whimper at the far end of the gorse! Oh, *do* be quiet, chattering people, and *do* stand still, you idiotic horses, and stop champing your bits for one single second to give one a chance of hearing what is going on! There again!—yes, it *was* a whimper, and there is another and another, and a growing chorus as they hunt up-wind towards us. Tally-ho! There he goes! Stand still, for any sake, you people on your feet; but of course they can't resist it, and rushing out into the field with wild yells they head the fox back into covert. Out come the hounds, crashing through the fence, down they flash over the line, singing with all their hearts. 'Tally-ho byke!' and two short notes on the horn from Will inside the wood. 'Byke to him! Hyke, byke!' from Fred as he gallops from his corner and, getting round them, cracks his whip and puts them back.

Away they all scuffle, in a minute more they are on the line again, and running like distraction. 'There is a rare scent in covert, anyhow,' we whisper to each other, while the music they are making sends cold shivers down our backs. The horses tremble with excitement and begin waltzing round and round, snatching at their bridles and fretting to be off. We still hear Will inside the gorse cheering the hounds as they cross the rides with his 'Hark!



OUT COME THE HOUNDS, CRASHING THROUGH THE FENCE

cry hark!' and 'Over, over, over,' as round they go and round again, while the crowd sit motionless outside and groan for fear the fox may be chopped.

At last a ringing 'View holloa' from the low end of the covert, which sends the blood tingling all through our veins. One minute more and then we hear Will blowing them away 'tŏ-tŏ-tōō, tŏ-tŏ-tōō,' those two short notes and the long one which we all know so well. Hooray! now then, set sail and don't lose your start.

'Hyke away! Hyke awa-a-a-ay!' from Tom at the low end, as the last hounds go tumbling through the hedge and set to work to catch the others up. There are no two ways about it this time; they are away and no mistake. And now, how to get through this abominable little hand gate? The master, who has been standing with the hook of his crop on the latch, now jerks it up and swings it back, as he passes through and breaks into a gallop in the field beyond.

Oh, what a crush and hustle! Men squeezing against each other, horses turning sulky and trying to back out of the crowd; those in front hold up a warning hand, while those behind let their horses nibble confidingly at the tails before them, and the unavailing cry of each and all is 'Oh, *get on*, for any sake! *Get on*, or else *let me come*!'

I have the red ribbon to thank for my start, as the awe it inspired in others served to sniggle me through close on the tail of the flea-bitten grey. Now we are clear, with only three or four in front of us, and as both our horses can slip along it does not take long to catch up the hounds. Look how they are streaming away over that ridge and furrow field ahead!—Jack as usual cutting out the work, as the old white horse sails over a high bit of timber in a corner, while the rest of them swish through a bullfinch to his left. I see Bill leading a little band of pilgrims on the right, and Nelly there as usual, sitting down to gallop as only Nelly can—most women *can't* gallop, and not *very* many men, but Nelly is a little better than the common herd, and it always gives me pleasure to see her going along.

Forrard they go with a tearing scent across the next field, and down the hill beyond. He is a rare good fox, for we are running bang across the middle of every field, and each hound is straining every nerve to catch him; you never heard such a cry in your life, while we, the lucky ones, are doing all we know to live with them, and the 289 brave souls behind are racing one another to keep in sight of the red backs ahead.

Is that a brook two fields away? Those stubbly willows look most unpleasantly like it! How we all pray in our hearts that the banks are sound—doubtless several wish in secret that the hounds may turn before they reach it. But not a bit of it; every stride is taking them nearer, and in they plop and out on the other side, scrambling and dripping, but never dwelling an instant, and away they race again, all together up the hill, until they disappear like a covey of birds over the newly-laid fence at the top. However big the brook may be, however unsound its banks, there is

WE BOTH GET SAFELY OVER

clearly nothing for it but to harden our hearts and have a go. A big man in front and Will rattle down at it together. Bill, further up to the left, is already on the other side, and the chestnut settling into his stride again. Nelly is close by; I am glad she is all right, for in a hunt—as in life—we like to have our own friends round us, and cannot feel quite happy unless we know they are there. The man on the bay leaves one leg behind him, to the destruction of a dashing youth behind, who did not give him room to land. Jack picks his own place, well on one side; I

follow him, of course, and we both get safely over. All the rest get across somehow, but the sound of splashing waters is borne upon our ears, telling its tale of woe, as we try to nurse our horses up this steep bit of hill. The stake and bind at the top is newly laid and does not look like giving; we shall want all our wind to carry us safely over. The man on the bay is down again, but he gets up smiling, though his hat has become suddenly transformed into a concertina, and his horse is done to a turn.

'Come slow, it's very blind!' shouts the next to land, as he strides away again. The gentleman jockey is the next to go, racing at it with the courage born of steeplechases. Down he goes on his nose and up again, making a hole in the fence as a relic of his prowess, and of invaluable assistance to those who come behind. We scramble through with grateful hearts, and gallop on over a heavy ridge and furrow field towards a black-looking fence in the distance.

'I wish to goodness there was a gate out of this,' says Jack, slowing down to let me up alongside of him. 'That little horse of yours has had about enough.'

'I know,' I answered dubiously, for I can feel he is not going as strong as I could wish, and no wonder, for we have been running like distraction for five and forty minutes.

'That is a beastly place in front of us. I know it well,' he continues, eyeing my horse with dissatisfaction. 'But there is no gate on this side of the field; what shall we do? I don't want *you* to have a fall.'

'Oh, I'm all right,' I answer; 'we *must* go on, they're running just as hard as ever up that hedge side. *Do* go on!' So on he goes, the old white horse stealing along close to the ground, and Jack standing up in his stirrups as he slides away to the front again. It does one good to see a man ride like that, I think to myself as I watch the check back with loving eyes. All the same I do wish he would be a true friend this time and carry away half that horrid-looking bullfinch in front! But, alas for me! It is not the men like him who make the gaps. What a trial they are to follow, those artists that flit across a country, down the furrows and over the gaps, never seeming in a hurry but *always* in front of you and generally *clean*! Of course he goes at it quite slow and quite collected, and I see the white quarters disappear as the thick boughs close together again after him. I am some way behind, giving him plenty of room, but it will be my turn in a minute, and I must confess that I don't like the look

of the place one bit. However, go we must. The others are all scattered now, and no one has picked this place but ourselves. My horse dislikes the idea as much as I do, but his heart is too game to let him refuse, so at it we dash; he makes a mighty effort, but a thick branch catches him below the chest. I hear a crashing sound, and see nothing before me but my own knee as the roan's

'GOOD HEAVENS, CHILD! I THOUGHT YOU WERE KILLED'

head and neck double up underneath me. Down we go, head over heels, on to the road beyond; then he rolls over. Twice he rolls on the top of me and then lies still; another instant and he struggles up again and gets into a sitting position, but, losing his balance, back he comes once more. 'Heavens, he is going to kill me!' I inwardly ejaculate. 'Will no one *ever* come to save me?' And then I feel a sickening crush and a swimming black-

ness comes before my eyes, while wheels fly round in my head, and I know no more.

. . . . . .

When I open my eyes again, instead of being stone dead, as I expected, I am much relieved to find myself propped up against a buckskin knee, with a strong arm around my waist and a horrid taste of brandy in my mouth. 'Thank God!' I hear in a far-away voice, which seemed to tremble a good deal, and as I become more conscious I look up and see Jack's dear ugly face white with fear, and I feel my hand tightly imprisoned in his. I like this part of it very much, and have a strong disinclination to move.

'Is my horse all right?' I ask, with a little gasp, for it hurts me rather to speak.

'Yes, all right.'

'Where are the hounds?' I continue, trying to be jovial.

'Oh, dash the hounds!' says Jack, 'what *do they* matter? Good heavens, child! I thought you were killed. If anything were to happen to *you* I don't know *what* I should do!' and he turns his head away that I may not see the tears which would come to his eyes. Then as I look he turns his face again, and I can see his great heart's yearning through the dear blue eyes as they look into mine for half a minute silently; then, somehow, his lips meet mine; and so, without a word, we have found that *nothing* matters in all the world, for his heart has found its home in mine, and so, thank God, has mine in his, and I know that I shall always bless my little roan horse as long as I live for giving me that fall upon the opening day.

NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

In an old number of the 'Sporting Magazine,' dated 1824, I find an account of a match, shot between Lord Kennedy and Mr. William Coke; and it strikes me as interesting, from the comparison afforded of what was considered good sport early in the century and is considered so now, near as we are to the end of it. Birds lay better, we may be sure, for the country was wilder; there were fewer enclosures, there was less drainage, and infinitely more cover for birds before scientific farming came into vogue. On the other hand, the 'fowling-piece' has vastly improved, though skilful shooters made very pretty practice with their clumsy old guns, as we learn from the authentic records of Colonel Hawker and others. As for the match in question, it would seem that Lord Kennedy and Mr. Coke had been vaunting the sport to be obtained, the first in Scotland, the second in Norfolk. They agreed, therefore, both to go out, first on September 26, secondly on October 4, Lord Kennedy on his own estates, Mr. Coke on his uncle's manors near Holkham; each was to be accompanied by a couple of umpires, representing his opponent, and whoever killed most partridges won the wager.

Mr. Coke set out early, with several keepers, the umpires—who, of course, did not assist—and a dog; also his uncle, who

loaded for him on occasions. It was very foggy, and the turnips were so wet that the birds would not lie in them; but in the course of a couple of hours, about eight, the weather cleared, and the day became fine. The sportsman killed 86½ brace and five pheasants, which latter, however, did not count. On the next day—October 4, that is—he got 88 brace, but there was a dispute, the nature of which is not stated, about one bird, so that only 87½ were counted; that makes 173 brace in all. On the second day Mr. Coke shot better than on the first, firing many fewer shots. He killed—this is a point for comparison with to-day—180 birds in 327 shots. I suppose the odd five were more pheasants, for 87½ brace means 175 birds. Lord Kennedy did considerably worse. He got 50 brace the first day, 82 the second, or 132 brace in all, and was thus decisively beaten by 42½ brace. How many shots he fired is not stated. Mr. Coke, on the second day, hit oftener than he missed, it will be seen, for with a half-and-half proportion 327 charges would have meant 163 birds, and he accounted for 17 more; but one suspects that the partridges were not nearly so hard to approach as they are to-day, and, rising out of roots and thick stubble, would not, as a rule, take much shooting. What, I wonder, would have been Mr. Coke's proportion of kills to cartridges with driven birds?

No doubt the pair of them were convinced that they had done an amazing amount of shooting, and their friends agreed with them. Mr. Coke's uncle, it will be seen, helped him to load—and the younger generation of sportsmen do not realise what a tedious business that was. I have a vague recollection of an old muzzle-loader that I used as a boy for want of a better, and loading *was* a ceremony! Think of it! You inverted your powder-flask and poured the measure down the barrel; then you felt in your pocket for a wad, drew the ramrod, and stuck the little round of stuff into the barrel, thrusting it down till the ramrod bounced when flung down against the wad; then you measured your shot in the shot-flask, poured it in; another wad, another thrust, another bounce; and then you felt in another pocket for a cap—often dropped it on the ground if your fingers were cold or your gloves clumsy; and at last you were loaded. In my boyish enthusiasm I would gladly have spent an hour over the operation for the sake of a shot, had it been necessary; but it was a joy, none the less, to get hold of a pinfire gun. Very likely many readers of

these 'Notes' have never seen one, and do not know that a little brass pin projected vertically from the base of the cartridge and fitted into a little hole at the base of the barrel. It seemed that finality was absolutely reached in the way of rapidity and convenience; but then came central-fire, so infinitely more convenient still. Is any further advance possible, I wonder? I wonder, also, what Mr. Coke and Lord Kennedy would have said if they had been told that some day a sportsman (Lord Walsingham) would fire 1,510 cartridges and kill 1,058 grouse in a single day? Assuredly they would have thought the idea very mad indeed, and utterly beyond the bounds of possibility.

We end the racing season with the unpleasant knowledge that we have in training about as bad a lot of horses as has existed within living memory. It is a melancholy conclusion to reach, but I fear that it cannot be avoided; though it is by no means to be deduced from this that breeding is a failure and the English thoroughbred horse played out. Bad years will occasionally come. We had one in 1881, when Iroquois, far from a great horse, carried off Derby and Leger; and a worse followed, when the rather soft and moderate Shotover won Two Thousand and Derby and the speedy but non-staying Geheimniss the Oaks; though in Iroquois' year there were good horses in training—it was certainly a great field that started for the Cambridgeshire, and the three-year-old winner, Foxhall, who got home with 9 st., was a really good animal. One might have been pessimistic in 1887, when not only was Merry Hampton very many pounds below the average of Derby winners, but that poor plater, The Baron, was second to him, and started an odds-on favourite. So in 1890, when Sainfoin won; so in 1891 with Common—at least I could never regard him as anything approaching to the first rank; so still more in 1895, with possibly the worst lot of 'classic' horses ever seen; for Kirkconnel and Galeottia won the 'Thousands,' Sir Visto the Derby and Leger (with the poor plater, Curzon, only just barely beaten at Epsom), and La Sagesse the Oaks. Truly in reviewing the events of that year there was cause to lament the decadence of the breed; but St. Frusquin and Persimmon were coming on, and raised the standard to the level, some maintain, of the palmiest days of racing; at any rate, we may all admit, to not far below.

It appears, therefore, that though we have had a bad lot of three-year-olds this year, and seem likely to have no better next, a similar state of things has been experienced before, and no one can say that among the yearlings who will be two-year-olds in a very few weeks there may not be the equals of Bend Or, Robert the Devil, St. Gatien, Donovan, Isinglass and other notable horses. Possibly we may find an Ormonde or a St. Simon—who knows? I am by no means prepared to decry our own horses because of the successes of Merman, Georgic, and other foreigners, for their victories have been gained in handicaps in which they have been treated with undue leniency; though at the same time the American importations have unquestionably shown excellent form. St. Cloud ran so well in the St. Leger last year that the talk of his being a coarse, clumsy coach-horse is strongly suggestive of jealousy. He may not be handsome, but he could gallop; though to eulogise him highly for finishing well up with Galtee More is to assume that the latter was much out of the common, an assumption I have never accepted. It was rather a blow to insular pride, however, to find the American Caiman at the top of the Free Handicap, set down by impartial authority as the best two-year-old of the season. I fancy John Porter knows better than this. If a match were made between Caiman and Flying Fox, I have little doubt that the Kingsclere horse would be a warm favourite, and I should confidently expect to see him win. I propose, however, to discuss Turf topics at length in the next number of the magazine, for there is more to be said than the few pages I can spare for 'Notes' will allow.

To a great many of us there is always something vastly inspiriting in the sight of horses jumping fences, or even swinging over hurdles; and though we may lament that so few good animals are found at the game, and may be doubtful as to the morals of some of those who are connected with it, cross-country sport is always a more or less pronounced attraction. It is to be much regretted that we are so badly off for gentlemen-riders, and though our old friend *laudator temporis acti* is sadly given to talking nonsense, for once he has justification when he compares the present with the past. We have Mr. G. S. Davies, very good indeed, who would have held his own with the very best at any period; Mr. Reginald Ward, who has trained on to quite the first class; Mr. Withington, almost if not quite 'as good as they make them;' Mr. F. B. Atkinson, an excellent horseman, too

seldom seen. Some useful soldiers: Messrs.—rank must be excused—A. Lawson, Coventry, Lambton, Crawley, Murray-Thriepland, Hughes-Onslow, and others; and a number of riders of varying capacity who concern themselves with training and devote themselves to the business of sport. Some of these are gentlemen, like Mr. C. Beatty and others that might be named, though it would be invidious to attempt a list; some are 'qualified' riders, who might become professional jockeys any day without surprising anybody. But, taking up an old *Ruff's Guide*, evidence is found of a greatly better state of affairs. We certainly do not nowadays come upon such an array of amateurs as these: Mr. Arthur Coventry, his brother, Captain 'Bee,' Colonels Knox and Harford, Lord Marcus Beresford, Messrs. Arthur Yates, W. H. Johnstone, C. J. Cunningham, Brockton, Crawshaw, W. B. Morris, Garrett and W. H. Moore, Luke White, 'Bay' Middleton, Rolwyn, Dalbiac, Brocklehurst, Smith (Captain 'Doggy'), Lee Barber. There were others, I know, whose names do not happen to be on the few pages at which I have glanced, and my own recollection does not quite extend to 1878, the year with which I am dealing; but the Beasleys and E. P. Wilson were hard at it and constantly to the fore. The array of talent was assuredly stronger then than it is now.

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